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ABSTRACT

This proceedings comes from a conference whose purpose was to provide a vehicle for thoughtful discourse and analysis of such Hispanic American issues as education; access to health care; and community viability and the environment as viewed by Latino theorists, activists, and the Hispanic members of Congress. The discussions included the challenge for Hispanics in using cultural diversity as a strength, the culturally inclusive curriculum, the environmental movement and environmental hazards, education, access to health care, community validity, women and public policy, coalition building, and the viability and results of an electronic town meeting. Specific to the curriculum, the participants note that little research money has been allocated to study the impact of multicultural curricula. The presenters illustrate the complexity of the problem of low academic achievement, and suggest that designing a culturally inclusive curriculum should be seen as only one step in what must be a multifaceted approach. Presenters also discuss the appropriate roles of parents, industry, community, and school systems in the educational system. Among the elements suggested for successful educational partnerships are long-term commitment, accountability, financial resources, and mutual respect. Conference attenders conclude that Hispanics must use their diversity and be politically active to ensure that policies regarding environment and education reflect their concerns. (GLR)

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Issues Conference

September 29 through October 2, 1993

Washington, D.C.

Proceedings

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Message from the Chairman

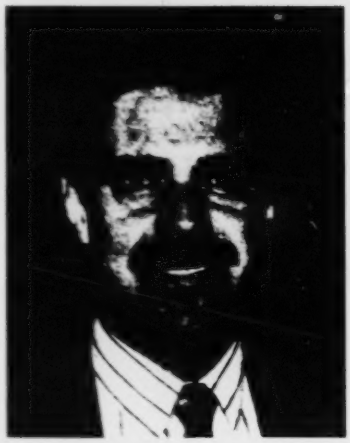
It is with a great sense of pride and gratitude that I present the formal proceedings from the first annual CHCI Issues Conference.

My pride stems from a sense of accomplishment. When I became chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and the Institute, I asked my colleagues on the CHCI Board of Directors to endorse my proposal that the Institute host a conference for the serious discussion of those issues that affect our communities. We deliberately identified the so-called "bread and butter" issues which families across America face on a day-to-day basis. We avoided issues that have somehow become labeled as "Latino."

My gratitude, of course, is for the magnificent manner in which you responded.

As I stated in my opening remarks on September 30th, the good news is that we've never done this before. The bad news is that we've never done this before. I am very grateful to each of you who gathered in our nation's capital in the middle of Hispanic Heritage Month to participate in those uncharted waters we termed "discourse and dialogue." Some two hundred and fifty thoughtful, active participants helped the Institute launch our inaugural conference with dazzling success. I could not have been more pleased with the results.

In reviewing these proceedings, it is most gratifying to note that the work of the Institute, particularly in its Leadership Development programs, has already begun to incorporate some of the suggestions made by conference participants.



The Honorable Jose E. Serrano
Chairman, Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute

Luis Reyes, for example, my colleague who serves so ably on the New York City Board of Education, suggested that coalition-building between our community and the African-American community can begin here in Washington, DC, with leadership development activities held jointly with the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Interns and Fellows. These activities, already in progress, take on new meaning as the call for such action comes from the grassroots level.

It is appropriate that conference participants review this body of work as the Institute begins preparations for the 1994 Issues Conference. Read this document carefully. It represents a dramatic forward step in realizing the potential contribution Latinos now make to the American political process.

Executive Summary

To further our mandate to assist the national Latino community in gaining a greater understanding of the American political process, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI/Institute) held an Issues Conference in Washington, DC from September 30 - October 2, 1993. The purpose of this conference was to provide a vehicle for thoughtful discourse and analysis of such issues as education, access to health care, community viability and the environment by Latino theorists, activists, and the Hispanic Members of Congress. The conference theme, "Threads of Diversity - The Fabric of Unity," provided a context for the three-day event.

Recognizing the growing diversity of the national Latino community, the Institute was deliberate in selecting session presenters who reflected the variety of Hispanic ethnic groups, as well as the vast geography of the community. The conference provided many opportunities to celebrate Hispanic diversity, beginning with a focus on Cultural Diversity. The Institute provided a demographic overview of the national Latino presence to examine the impact of such diversity on the formulation of public policy.

Census figures presented during the plenary session indicate that Latinos now represent 10% of the U.S. population, with an increase of three million since 1990. Ninety percent of the Latino community is concentrated in metropolitan areas and central cities. We tend to work in those areas of employment that are projected to decline in economic importance. Forty-one percent of Latino children under the age of 18 are living in poverty. Census data also confirmed the widely-held belief that Latinos tend to be among those who either have no health insurance or minimal coverage.

Cultural Diversity

"Given this demographic profile, how can the Latino community prepare itself legislatively for this growth?"

The greatest challenge, most presenters agreed, will be to learn as a community how to use our diversity as a strength. The first step is recognizing that, despite such common identifiers as "Hispanic" and "Latino," some three dozen separate and distinct Latin American and Caribbean ethnic groups are represented in the current population of the United States.

Participation in the political process is fundamental and becomes increasingly complicated. Because the United States has a strong history of representative democracy, there is often the misconception that the rest of the hemisphere shares this tradition. Presenters highlighted differences in the relationships of Latino ethnic groups to the U.S. as factors that have an impact on this important issue of political participation.

Poverty manifests itself differently among the various Latino groups. For example, Mexican-American poverty results from low wage employment, Puerto Rican poverty stems from lack of unemployment, and Cuban poverty is concentrated among the elderly. Research that drives debate on significant social policy traditionally has not included Latinos. Including Latinos, however, is not enough; the research must recognize the diversity in culture and experience among Latinos.

"Given the generally-low academic achievements of Latinos and other students of color, how can a culturally-inclusive curriculum positively affect those children's academic performance?"

A Culturally-Inclusive Curriculum

Very little research money has been allocated to study the impact of multi-cultural curricula. Presenters illustrated the complexity of the problem of low academic achievement, suggesting that designing a culturally-inclusive curriculum should be seen as only one step in what must be a multi-faceted approach.

By definition, a culturally-inclusive curriculum must be fluid and flexible to adapt to the changing demographics of this nation. It should also be defined as an education that reflects and supports the diverse nature of the world community, and one that preserves and respects the individuality of each student. The process of developing multi-cultural curricula must include the parents. Communities must learn how to hold such vital institutions as the school accountable for the quality of their children's education. Participation in school board elections and establishing coalitions with other people of color were strongly recommended by presenters and participants alike.

The Environment

Opinion was somewhat divided as to Latino participation in the environmental movement. Some presenters advocated a more visible role and more education with the Hispanic community regarding environmental hazards, while others maintained that Latinos have been active all along, citing the farm workers' struggle against the use of pesticides as one example.

"If we assume that most of the communities come to the environmental debate having organized around a specific issue, how can we address long-term solutions and policy initiatives for these problems?"

There was strong agreement that Latinos are disproportionately affected by such environmental concerns as solid waste disposal, water pollution and air pollution. Presenters also suggested that Latinos must be included in the research conducted by the Environmental Protection Agency, as well as including Latinos in key EPA staff positions. The conference addressed environmental justice, emphasizing the need for community participation in decision-making and the formulation of public policy.

Education

"Corporation A, Community Group B and School System C are developing an educational partnership model that has the ultimate goal of graduating Latino students from college at rates of 25 to 40 percent. What components are necessary for success?"

Fundamental to the success of any partnership is the involvement of parents. Presenters discussed the appropriate roles of parents, industry, community and school systems in our educational system. Among the elements suggested for successful educational partnerships were long-term commitment, accountability, financial resources and mutual respect.

Presenters and participants agreed that any approach to solving such complex problems must be comprehensive and must be addressed within the context of the entire community.

Access to Health Care

"Given the variety of proposals pending before Congress in the health care debate, what are those issues of access that are particularly important to the Latino community?"

Presenters and participants of this session included representatives of government, community-based organizations and health providers. Chief among their concerns is the fact that Latinos are under-represented across the health care spectrum — from doctors and health care professionals to policy analysts and health care facilities.

As in other sessions, presenters cited the lack of Latino medical research and encouraged the development of funding mechanisms to conduct specifically such studies. There was also concern regarding the future of the nation's community health centers, widely seen as one of the most successful vehicles for providing health care to under-served communities. There was consensus that these community health centers may well suffer under a reform plan that would force them to compete with health care alliances serving broader constituencies at lower costs. A related concern is how the alliances will compensate for the cost of providing culturally-appropriate care.

The issue of health care for the undocumented posed a difficult problem in the face of a growing national debate on immigration reform.

Community Viability

"What elements must a community, either urban or rural, have in order to be viable?"

Discussion centered around economic issues, both in terms of jobs and community investment. Community development corporations operated for, and by, grassroots agencies were cited as examples of projects that can empower Latino communities to shape their future. Political participation was defined as playing an active role in formulating the policies that affect our daily lives.

There appeared to be general consensus that those elements which make a community viable include jobs, housing, quality schools and a safe environment. The challenge for Latino communities is to organize and define a vision of what will work for them - then to develop a strategy and process to achieve an optimum level of viability. Opportunities for young people, educationally and economically, were cited as key elements for successful communities.

Women & Public Policy

"Will the growing number of women, especially Latinas, have an impact on the formulation of public policy?"

The 103rd Congress has a record number of women, including a Mexican-American from California, a Puerto Rican from New York and a Cuban from Florida. A common element found among politically active Latinas is grassroots, community-based involvement. Research indicates that women have a different perception of politics, tending to favor public arenas and methods of negotiation, as opposed to personal connections and so-called "backroom politics." Women have a tendency to define issues of justice and equality in more collective or community-based terms, rather than as individual rights.

Practical concerns for women interested in elected office involve child care. Women are still primary care givers for their children and responsible for the family's welfare. It is also important to demystify politics and politicians, so that women will not be discouraged to run for higher office.

Coalition Building

African-Americans come to this debate with a history as a proud people enslaved by men in this hemisphere, followed by a century of freedom without civil rights, followed by the past thirty years of the hard-fought struggle of the civil rights movement. Latinos come to the same debate with a variety of experiences and societal relationships and with a similar lack of economic opportunity.

The final plenary session focused on building coalitions between the Latino and African-American communities. The discussion was led by the Chairmen of the Congressional Hispanic and Black Caucuses, who both stated their commitment to explore opportunities to work together. Participants addressed the concern that even among the various Latino groups, the issue of race and color is divisive. African-Americans come to this debate with a history as a proud people enslaved by men in this hemisphere, followed by a century of freedom without civil rights, followed by the past thirty years of the hard-fought struggle of the civil rights movement. Latinos come to the same debate with a variety of experiences and societal relationships, and with a similar lack of economic opportunity.

While discussions of working together are taking place on Capitol Hill, many participants pointed to the tension and hostility found at the local level. More work has to be done locally, so that suspicions and fears that have been allowed to grow and divide people can be set aside. The first step is to determine areas of mutual concern. The consensus was that the movement for building coalitions between the Latino and African-American communities would begin at the national level, with leadership through example.

Electronic Town Meeting

Prior to the event, studio audience participants in Los Angeles, San Antonio, Chicago, New York, Miami and San Juan were surveyed on the same issues addressed during the conference.

The Issues Conference concluded with a seven-site electronic town meeting. Prior to the event, studio audience participants in Los Angeles, San Antonio, Chicago, New York, Miami and San Juan were surveyed on the same issues addressed during the conference. Based on their responses, the two-hour electronic town meeting was divided into three segments: education, health care and community viability. Audience participants in the six sites outside of Washington, DC, joined the dialogue and added a local perspective through their comments and questions.

Conclusion

On the threshold of the twenty-first century, a host of factors have laid the groundwork for substantive Latino involvement in the evolving social debate in the United States. We must be vigilant in using our diversity as a source of strength. Active participation of Latinos at both the local and national level will help insure that policies regarding environment and education reflect our concerns.

Perhaps the clearest and most immediate impact the Latino community can have on public policy is in the coming debate on health care reform. Coalition building will be an important aspect of health care reform. The challenge for the Latino community is to become fully engaged in this vital debate.

Note: The proceedings of each session have been transcribed verbatim. The Institute elected not to edit any presentation or comment.

Plenary Session On Cultural Diversity

Presenters:

Jorge H. Del Pinal, Ph.D.
U.S. Census Bureau

Angelo Falcon
President and Founder
Institute for Puerto Rican Policy

Silvia Pedraza
Associate Professor of Sociology and American Culture
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

Rogelio Saenz
Associate Professor
Texas A&M University, Department of Sociology
and Rural Sociology

Anna Maria Santiago, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Department of Sociology
Indiana University

Lisandro Perez
Director
Cuban Research Institute

Congressional Members:

Honorable Jose Serrano

Honorable Ed Pastor

Honorable Henry Bonilla

Ms. Elizondo: I am Rita Elizondo, the Executive Director of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute. I am very pleased to welcome you here today to the First Annual Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute Issues Conference. We are going to begin with Father Lippert, who will lead us in a very short prayer.

Father Lippert: May we please stand.

In the midst of conflict and division, we know that you turn our minds to thoughts of peace. You change our hearts, as enemies begin to speak to one another, as those who were estranged join hands in friendship, and as peoples and nations seek the way of peace together.

Good and gracious God, hear us as we invoke your Holy Name over this conference and the discussion of the important issues that will be considered.

Give us the wisdom of our abuelitos to recognize love and appreciate the multi-textured, multi-colored threads of diversity that are the peoples of our country. And, Lord, give us the energy and courage of our youth to work together to weave these into a wonderful, strong, and beautiful fabric of unity and peace.

Amen.

Ms. Elizondo: Thank you, Father. And now I am going to turn it over to the chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, as well as chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute, from the Bronx in New York, Congressman Jose Serrano.

Congressman Serrano: Thank you, Rita, and Father. And thank you, to all of you.

Ladies and gentlemen, let me officially welcome you to the First Annual Issues Conference of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute.

The good news is that we've never done this before. The bad news is that we've never done this before. And so we will try to do it together.

Thursday, September 30 PROCEEDINGS

9:00 am -11:30 am Rayburn House Office Building

There is no better way to describe the Latino community in the United States than threads of diversity woven together into a fabric of unity. That is the theme for Hispanic Heritage Month 1993.

It was emphasized at our annual Gala Dinner on September 16th, and it is the theme of this issues conference, threads of diversity, the fabric of unity.

Latinos in this country come from many nations, including Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama, Colombia, Honduras, Guatemala, Peru, Ecuador, Argentina, everywhere — and you always run the risk that somebody will be upset —and the Dominican Republic.

For all of these differences, we are statistically united in this country in a single category as Latinos or Hispanics. We're not a small group.

The U.S. Department of the Census released figures just yesterday which clearly show the Latino community is the fastest growing segment of American society.

One could probably draw a parallel between the diversity in the Hispanic community and the diversity of groups that comprise the United States. The whole of American society is una mezcla, composed of immigrants from Europe, Asia, and elsewhere, as well as my need to always work closely with Angelo Falcon, in reminding you that Puerto Ricans are very touchy about the word "immigrant." This word is a lot of migrants who come from other parts of our territories. All of the diverse ingredients of these cultures have come together in this country to become known throughout the world as Americans. This conference is historical in nature. This is the first time Hispanics have come together in a national forum to deliver the message that this diverse community is united in our zeal to make the most and the very best of our democracy.

As a community, this is a time for us to learn, and a time for us to teach. Throughout the course of this conference we will discuss a host of issues which confront our country and our community.

It is no coincidence that the first session of this conference is devoted to cultural diversity. At our luncheon today, we will hear Housing and Urban Development Secretary Henry Cisneros speak to the subject of unity among Latinos.

This afternoon we will address implementing a cultural inclusive curriculum and how matters of the environment affect the Latino community in the United States.

Tomorrow morning, we will discuss the education of the next generation of Latinos because we know that one thing that will propel young people into a better life is a solid, quality education.

Also tomorrow morning we will discuss the overriding issue of concern for every single American, the importance of access to health care.

During the course of this conference, let us work toward a common goal to use this time to come to agreement on how best to affect legislation on behalf of the Latino community in the United States.

The national Hispanic leadership in Congress has been very influential in the policy making process of this administration. We are welcomed into the inner sanctum of the White House, not just for an audience, but for advice and counsel.

After lunch, we will spend the afternoon discussing how the various elements of our communities can work in tandem to fit the needs of our diverse geography, as well as the impact of Latinos in public policy.

The 103rd Congress has brought record numbers of women to the legislative body, and we're lucky to count two Latinas among them.

The highlight of the Issues Conference on Saturday will be a breakfast address by my dear friend, Mayor David Dinkins, on coalition building, followed by an electronic town meeting.

I am very excited about the electronic town meeting, not because it is the first of its kind, but because it represents the very essence of democracy.

In this country, the government is composed of the governed. To that end, we will link — when we link by satellite six sites from around the country, for a two-way conversation between the Hispanic community and the national Hispanic leadership, the governed will speak directly to the government.

This will be historic, and the extraordinary conversation will be available to the viewers of the PBS network, and any other commercial network that chooses to run it.

And, incidentally, it has been already picked up by quite a few stations throughout the nation that will be airing it starting with Saturday night, right here in Washington.

Let me close with a challenge. During the course of this conference, let us work toward a common goal to use this time to come to agreement on how best to affect legislation on behalf of the Latino community in the United States.

We can disagree, if we must, but let us find those areas of agreement and seek to convert what we have agreed upon into law.

This is a time for us to learn and a time for us to teach. Let us do it well. Let us be an example for others to follow. This is good for the Latino community and it is the very essence of our democracy.

Let me also ask you to do me a special favor. Because it is the first time that we meet in this way, and because it is the first time that we will try to pull off this kind of a conference, I need your help, as much as possible, to be with us for the various activities that will take place.

And so, not only today's luncheon and tomorrow's luncheons, and the other activities, but I call upon you, if possible, to be with us on Saturday morning when we undertake a very serious issue, the possibility or the concern for a coalition between America's two largest minorities, which very quickly will become the majority of the school systems throughout this country and in many other places.

And secondly, to join us in making the town hall meeting a real success. We will put together L.A., San Antonio, Chicago, New York, Miami, and San Juan, on a satellite hookup. It will be the first time that will happen with 200 people at each site.

So we need you to be with us throughout the conference. We need you to participate. We need you to take the message back that we made this attempt. And we want you, more than anything else, to understand that the strength of our legislative leadership here is based on the support we get from you. And so we thank you for your attendance today, and we look forward to a wonderful conference. Thank you.

Ms. Elizondo: Thank you, Congressman. And now we are going to begin and I will — and I want to introduce to you Ricardo Brown, with Telemundo, who is our moderator for this morning and will explain our goals and objectives and how we plan to run this session.

Thank you. Ricardo?

Mr. Brown: Thank you, very much. Both my colleague, Maria Elvira Salazar, a fellow correspondent for Telemundo, and I, are deeply honored to be a part of this activity, to be a part of this first Issues Conference by the Hispanic Congressional Caucus, to be among such distinguished panelists, and audience members.

We are going to try to run this plenary session on cultural diversity in an informal way, in a free-wheeling discussion type way.

First of all, I'd like to introduce the members of our panel. Dr. Lisandro Perez, who is an Associate Professor and Director of the Cuban Research Institute at FIU, Florida, International University, my son's college. Dr. Perez, at the end of the table.

We are also honored to have here Dr. Anna Maria Santiago, who is an Assistant Professor of Sociology, and the faculty of — Population Institute for Research and Training at Indiana University.

Seated next to her is Angelo Falcon, who is President and Founder of the Institute for Puerto Rican Policy, a non-profit, non-partisan policy center,

based in New York, that focuses on issues facing Puerto Rican and other Latino communities. Angelo Falcon.

Silvia Pedraza is an Associate Professor of Sociology and American Culture at the University of Michigan. Silvia, welcome.

Dr. Rogelio Saenz is an Associate Professor at Texas A & M University, the "aggies," in the Department of Rural Sociology. His areas of research focus on the demography of Latinos in the U.S., ethnic identification, and poverty. Doctor.

Jorge del Pinal is the Chief of the Ethnic and Hispanic Branch of the U.S. Census Bureau. He will be making a presentation today. Dr. del Pinal.

Also, from Miami, but Miami, Arizona, is Congressman Ed Pastor of the 2nd District of Arizona, a freshman member of Congress. He honors us with his presence.

You've all met our distinguished congressman from New York, Congresista Serrano. And joining us later will be Congressman Henry Bonilla, of Texas.

Well, we'll begin with a presentation by Jorge del Pinal on the demography of Latinos; who we are, where we are at.

Later we'll ask questions. Each of the panel members will have five minutes to answer the questions. And the audience will be free to interject their opinions, their questions, their comments at any time. Maria Elvira will be handling that part of the program. There will be a mike there and just step up. Dr. del Pinal.

Ms. Elizondo: If I may for just a moment, I want to be sure to recognize Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez, who is here.

She has a hearing she has to go to, so she's just going to join us for as long as time permits. Thank you, Congresswoman.

Dr. del Pinal: Please don't leave during my presentation. Just kidding.

Okay. Today we're going to talk about diversity. I'm going to start out by telling us about how Hispanics are diverse from the general population, and then I hope the rest of the panelists can fill in with some of the other diversity.

The Census Bureau, of course, produces a lot of information and I think whatever policy is being considered it needs to be informed by good information. And I think the Census Bureau is in the position to provide a lot of that information.

I'll be giving a presentation from this book, called Hispanic Americans Today, which you have in your folders, or you can get after the session, over on the corner there.

We also do an annual report on the Hispanic population, based on the current population survey. I believe there is copies of that in there.

And we're in the process of releasing more detailed reports. This one is on the foreign born population of the United States. There is many Latinos in here, because they are some of the larger foreign born components of our population.

But we will also be releasing a report based totally on the Hispanic groups in the United States.

And one other thing that's important and informs this discussion is that we also do population projections. Congressman Serrano honored us yesterday by releasing that information to the public, and so I'll be talking a little bit about that as well.

And we also, in the process of trying to reinvent government and be more responsive to customers, since it takes a long time to produce these kind of things and GPO sells them, which makes it a little bit difficult to get them all, we also produce some informal products that don't look as neat, but which have a lot of good stuff in them that we also produce and give out.

Okay. Let's go to the slides.

(Whereupon, there was a slide presentation.)

In the 1990 Census, it was already in excess of 22 million people in the United States of Hispanic or Latino descent. ... our new projections tell us that today, ... there are probably 25 million Latinos in the country.

Dr. del Pinal: I hope you all can see this. We'll start with the projections. What you see up here are obsolete because Congressman Serrano did release some new ones.

And basically the new projections tell us that the growth of the U.S. population will be faster, and one of those vital components of very fast growth is the Latino population.

Now, some of these figures, like I say, are obsolete, but it still gives us a good notion.

In 1970, the Latino count was about 9.1 million. By 1980, we were close to 15 million. In the 1990 census, it was already in excess of 22 million people in the United States of Hispanic or Latino descent.

Now, our new projections now tell us that today, as we speak, there are probably 25 million Latinos in the country.

By the year 2000, we think it's going to be 31, so it's already a little bit higher than here. And so forth through the end of the period that we show here as 2050, and that's going out pretty far. But the new projections now suggest that Latinos will be 88 million.

Sorry about that. It's moving as fast as the growth. It doesn't want to show it to you. For some reason, that doesn't want to show it to us.

Okay. There we go. Now, the other way to view this information is what percent of the population are we.

In 1970, we were less than five percent. So one out of every 20 persons in 1970 was Hispanic or Latino.

By 1990, that percentage was nine percent, so almost one out of every ten persons.

Now, in 1993, with our new projections, we do estimate that Latinos are one out of every ten people. And this number will go up so that now we — we think that by 2050, Latinos will be about 22 percent of the U.S. population.

Okay. We also have a lot of groups that comprise the population. The largest group is the Mexican-Americans, with over 13 million, followed by Puerto Ricans, with 2.7 million. Now, we're talking about the U.S. contiguous states. The Cuban is about a million,

and we have over a half million Dominicans now that we know about. And there is 1.3 million Central Americans, and about a million South Americans.

Then we have some other categories; Spaniards, about a half million. We have another category called Spanish/Spanish-American, with another half million.

Is anybody going to ask, how do these differ? We don't know yet. We want to study it a little bit more, but we suspect that people who say Spaniard really say they are descendants directly from Spain. And the other Spanish/Spanish-Americans, that tends to be the kind of name that's used in the Southwest.

So we'll be looking a little bit more at those, but those are some of the answers that we are given and we collect.

In the Central American group, we have Salvadorans with over a half million, Guatemalans with about 270,000, Nicaraguans with about 200,000, and we have Hondurans, Panamanians and Costa Ricans in slightly fewer numbers.

Among the South American groups we have Colombians, which is the largest, with about 380,000, Ecuadorans with almost 200,000, Peruvians with about 175,000, and on down the line.

We tend to live in a higher proportion in metropolitan areas. So nine out of every ten Hispanics live in a metropolitan area.

So we have every single country in Latin America that's Spanish speaking represented.

Now, the interesting thing about Latinos is that we aren't evenly spread out throughout the United States. I was saying that according to the 1990 census, we were about one in every ten persons. But we're not scattered throughout the United States. In fact, we're concentrated in certain states.

And one of the largest concentrations is in California, with 34 percent. So one out of every three Latinos in the United States lives in California.

And about 20 percent, one out of every five, lives in Texas. So just those two alone have — those two states have over half of the Hispanic population.

Now, I was saying that nationally we're nine percent of the population, but if you look at these states, they are one out of every four persons in California and Texas who are Latinos. So we're already in the year 2050 in the sense of what we expect to be in the United States. So we can look to those states as sort of what it's going to be like.

Here is another picture of — Latinos are in every state in the union. They just happen to be higher concentrations in the Southwest of the United States, California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and with strong concentrations in Florida, and New York, New Jersey, and Illinois.

Okay. But we're also not evenly spread throughout the state when we are in the states. We tend to live in a higher proportion in metropolitan areas. So nine out of every ten Hispanics live in a metropolitan area.

And not only that, when we are in metropolitan areas, we're more likely to live in the central city than we are in the — outside the central city area. And that's been more so over the last decade.

So here are some of the metropolitan areas. You can't read them too well, but Los Angeles metropolitan area has close to five million Latinos or Hispanics; New York has another close to three million. They probably already exceed those numbers today.

The Miami metropolitan area has over a million, and San Francisco/Oakland has close to a million. And the Chicago/Gary — well, Chicago area has about — close to 900,000.

And as somebody pointed out, if you take the top metro areas, it's a very huge proportion. You have about eight, nine million Latinos there out of 22 million living in just three large metropolitan areas.

One of the, I think, most important issues facing the Latino population is educational attainment. Essentially, educational attainment has been increasing for Latinos, but it has also for the rest of the population, so there is this gap that's remained since the '70s that persists today. And it is even more pronounced in the college ages. Latinos aren't completing college to the same extent as other groups, so they trail and they are not closing the gap.

Now, what difference does education make? Well, here we can see the effect of education — let's just pick males for example. A male with less than a 9th grade education made about $14,000 — almost $15,000 in March '91.

And during that same period, a man with a Bachelor's Degree was making $33,000. And a Hispanic with a Master's Degree was already making $38,000.

So education makes an enormous difference on the ability to earn money in this society.

Okay. We also collected information about language. Spanish is the second-most prevalent language spoken in the country. About 17 million people speak Spanish in the home. 17 million people, age five and over. We don't count the little ones who are not sure which language they speak yet.

This shows which one of our Latino countries are the major senders of people and Mexico comes in with about — close to 59 percent of the foreign born Latinos are from Mexico.

We have about five percent from the Dominican Republic, ten percent from Cuba, and about 11 percent from South America, and 15 percent from Central America. So a lot of influx of new folks.

Here we see a little bit of the history of immigration in the United States. Basically, in the '50s, you had migration really — this is legal movement — coming primarily from Canada and Europe was the primary — about 60 percent came from that.

After liberalizing the immigration laws in '65, things began to change. The primary result of those is that you had proportionately more Latinos and Asians coming in. So that, the other effect is that the number of legal migrants has increased dramatically.

In the '50s there was about two and a half million. In the '80s it was now over seven million that came in

legally. And about 43 percent of those came from Latin America and Mexico.

We also had a program under IRCA, the Immigration Reform and Control Act of '86, that allowed about three million persons that registered under that program to begin the process of becoming regular admitted immigrants. And I think that's going to have a profound effect on Latinos. You converted about three million people who used to be undocumented to a documented status.

The vast majority of those people came from Latin America. Almost all of them. Only 348,000 of those came from other areas of the world. And the largest proportion came from Mexico. About 2.3 million of those were from Mexico.

Throughout — this shows sort of the unemployment history of Latinos over the last decade, and basically the — we suffer in the recession area periods. The unemployment tends to go up very quickly and goes up even after we come out of the recession, and then gradually comes down. But never has the gap really totally disappeared. Latinos are always more unemployed.

We can see, over at the right-hand side, this last recessionary period. Supposedly it is over, but in terms of unemployment, it continues to go up beyond what was the official termination of that period of recession.

Here I'm just going to talk about the male unemployment — I'm sorry — occupations that Latinos occupy.

Primarily Latinos can be found in higher concentrations in the service sector, in farming, and forestry, and in the operator, fabricator, and laborer category, with a very significant proportion also in precision, projection, craft, and repair.

Now, according to the Department of Labor's projections into the next century, where the growth in the economy is going to be, it happens to be more in the managerial areas, the technical sales, and administrative support, and in the service sector.

So Latinos are positioned in the occupational structures, Latino men particularly — women are less so the case — but they are in these areas that are in the decline. That I see as a problem.

The other part about these occupations is that they pay less, they are less stable, so these are the first places people are laid off, and we see that in the unemployment areas. And so I think that's an area of concern that needs to be addressed in whatever Latino agenda there is.

Here we see median family income for Latinos is — really is affected by the recessionary periods, the economic climate, so to speak. But after you factor in the cost of living, Latino median family income has been pretty flat over the decade. So even though the income has gone up, after you consider inflation, there really hasn't been much net gain in the economic fortunes of families.

The same with poverty. Latino family poverty is very high. At the peak of the recessionary period in '82, for example, 27 percent of Latino families —so more than one out of every four Latino families —was living below the poverty line in 1982.

That went down a little bit to about 23 percent in 1989. That's just before the new recessionary period hit. And now it has gone back up to 26 percent again. So — but in every case, it's been always much higher and we are not closing that gap too much.

Primarily Latinos can be found in higher concentrations in the service sector, in farming, and forestry, and in the operator, fabricator and laborer category, with a very significant proportion also in precision, projection, craft and repair.

Okay. Poverty of families is also related to the type of family that you have, so that we find that among married couple families, poverty is much lower. And the poverty is dramatically high — in this case we're seeing that, for example, families headed by females, with children under 18, 60 percent of them. So six out of every ten of those type of families is living below the poverty line.

The other sad fact is that poverty also affects Hispanic children. And here we see that 41 percent of the children under 18 — Latino children under 18 — are living below poverty. And it is — of course, Latino poverty is higher at any age, but that's the dramatic one that sticks out.

And as our projections show, we're going to be depending much, much more on minority groups, of which Latinos is going to be a growing component, to fuel our labor force into the next century.

So we have the situation here where a large proportion of our future work force is growing up in poverty, and that should be of a lot of concern.

Now, there is also an up side. We tend to get our statistics and we say, "Gee, there is — it is all doom and gloom." The reality is is that there is also a lot of Latinos that are doing quite well. And, for example — this is just one illustration. The number of households in 1990 with 1989 incomes of $50,000 or more, nationally, 16 percent of Hispanic households had $50,000 or more income. And that varies by states. For example, in New Jersey, it was much higher, at 23 percent of Hispanic households had $50,000 or more. In California it was 21 percent, and so forth.

But you can see that some states are even below that. For example, Texas and New Mexico, with only nine percent of Hispanic families having this kind of income. So there is some positive notes there, too.

Now, one of the consequences of also being in the lower paying occupations is that they don't have a lot of benefits.

One of the things that's being talked about a lot now is national health insurance. Well, Latinos are more likely not to have any health insurance whatsoever, as shown by this chart. Eleven percent, for example, during the period of '87 to '89, a 28 month period, had no insurance coverage of any kind. No Medicaid, no Medicare, nothing.

And we show that about 36 percent had between one month and 27 months of coverage, and only about 54 percent had full coverage over that 28 month period, compared to 75 percent of the non-

Hispanic population.

So that's another consequence, that our group is less likely to be covered by whatever kinds of coverage there is out there.

...Latinos are more likely not to have any health insurance whatsoever...

And finally, we also collect voting statistics. One of the things that these charts show in general — there are some problems with these kind of statistics, but still it gives us a general pattern, which shows that Latinos are less likely to register and vote in all of our elections.

And this has already factored out the non-citizenship issue. So this is among people who are citizens. So in some senses we can say that Latinos are kind of squandering their political muscle.

But part of it is also, we think, related to the demography of Latinos. For example, we know that voting behavior is related to age. So if — older people tend to vote more than younger people. Latinos, in general, tend to be younger.

Voting behavior is also related to education. In general, the higher your education, the more likely you are to vote. Again, we've already seen the Latinos in general tend to have low educational attainment and, therefore, that plays into it.

And the final factor that I'm showing here is related to income. And generally, if your income is higher, you are more likely to register and vote than if your income is low. And in general, Latinos have much lower incomes.

So there are some demographic components to that low voter turnout, but I still think that's an issue that can be addressed in terms of getting more political power behind the numbers.

I guess that's it.

(Whereupon, the slide presentation was concluded.)

Dr. del Pinal: I had another slide that I wanted to present, having to do with what I think is related to NAFTA.

Right now there is a lot of discussion as to, you know, what kind of effect that might have on Latinos. And I think that's an important issue that needs to be studied.

But the figures I was going to show, which apparently I left out, was that Mexico is already the United States' third largest trading partner, after Canada and Japan. If you add Latin America, then it represents a huge trading partner to us. And so they are already a very important component of our economy, in terms of how we trade with other countries.

Thank you, very much.

Mr. Brown: Muchas gracias. Thank you, very much, Dr. del Pinal, for that excellent presentation.

We'll continue now with questions to our panel, and please — first pose a question to all the panel members. And Maria Elvira Salazar, my colleague from Telemundo, will pose the first question. Each panel member will have about five, seven minutes to answer.

After that, just feel free to join in, walk up to the mike, comment, question, nag, do whatever. Maria Elvira, the first question.

Ms. Salazar: Good morning. I hear that Congressman Bonilla is not here yet, and he was supposed to be the first one answering the questions. So I'm going to say the question and whomever wants to answer it first, please feel free, and then from there we're going to pick it up.

It says, "Giving the demographic evidence indicating that the Latino community will be the largest minority by the year 2010, how can we prepare ourselves, legislatively, for this growth?" I would say that maybe Congressman Serrano would like to answer that first, since it says "legislatively."

Congressman Serrano: Well, I'll be very brief because my role this morning should be to have all the other people speak.

Let me first say that just to back up something that the Census Bureau has said. My position has always been, and I'm very careful to say this in front of any Puerto Rican in the audience, that citizenship should determine certain things and not the status of the place that you live in.

Therefore, I think the Census Bureau should count the 3.7 million American citizens who live in Puerto Rico as part of the American census, which would change all those figures.

I also go further and believe that those citizens should be allowed to vote for president, whether they are a state or not, because the presidential vote should be based on.

So if you throw those figures in, then the registration is much higher, because in Puerto Rico they — they vote like crazy. And it just creates a whole different situation to look at.

I think, legislatively, what we do is continue to put forth, at every forum that we can, the fact that these figures that were presented today are our armament, our weapons, for all of the discussions in this country.

There can be, in my opinion, no gain unless we use these figures. For that reason, I've been saying that I will continue, during the time I have left as chairman of this caucus, to try to get the Hispanic Caucus to adopt, as one of our favorite agencies, the Census Bureau, because they build —first of all, without the Census Bureau, people on this panel would have nothing to say every so often, you know, because we're always quoting figures, and that's what we do. And our strength is the figures that they present.

How then we work together to bring them as political viewpoints to people, these figures can be used with people running for public office.

For instance, when you look at the immigration issue, when you look at the citizenship issue, and you look at the population of California, and then you realize that California has the largest congressional delegation, well that doesn't present a bleak picture for the future. It presents a very positive political future.

Legislatively, in my opinion, is to first get our act together and demanding representation at every level in elected office. And taking to court, before we bring people into legislative bodies, any — any plan, redis-

tricting plan throughout the nation, that does not do what it is supposed to do in providing for us the proper seats.

We celebrate Nydia Velazquez's entrance into Congress. What we shouldn't celebrate is the fact that two Puerto Ricans from New York is not the correct number in Congress. We celebrate our brothers and sisters from California who are members of Congress, and when we look at the population, we say they haven't even begun to be represented yet.

And so the fight, legislatively, in my opinion, has to be to first make sure that we make the argument that we need political representation, which is available to us by the numbers. And to continue to educate people in the process of voting.

One last point. That may be our biggest challenge, because it is not just the condition people find themselves in; education, income, and all the statistics that were presented, which indicate that you are — you tend not to vote when you come from that particular group; but understand that the largest growth is coming from countries — and we can say it publicly — where people were not encouraged to vote. The largest growth is coming from places where people in uniform have traditionally kept people who don't wear uniforms from voting in elections.

And so now they are being asked to come to the greatest democracy on Earth and vote, and they are not sure that their vote will count, or what role they'll play.

One last note. Recently, because of the asbestos crisis in New York, someone suggested that on Primary Day, they should put the National Guard outside tents in the schools, so that people could vote in tents, rather than the — in asbestos infected school buildings.

My staff and I were ready to go to court because what Latinos from Latin America do not need to see is a person in uniform outside the voting poll. And that's what we have to work towards, the proper representation, and then making sure that as we attempt this weekend here, these few days here, to have a closer relationship between the Latino community in general, its leadership, and the 20 and hopefully growing members of Congress that we have now.

Mr. Falcon: I think in terms of comparing legislatively, I think I'd have to second what the Congressman said about understanding that the legislative process is essentially a political process. And what we need to start thinking about is what these kinds of projections mean, because one assumption is that somehow all the Latinos are on the same wave length, that we are all one community on the move. You know, there are all these charts and stuff. You know, we scare the hell out of our African-American colleagues by saying, "Hey, we're going to be more than you in the year 2000," or whatever. Usually it's the year 2016, or some crazy number like that.

But what does it mean when you're talking about a diverse population, like the Latino population, where you have profiles of the different communities that are very different in many ways, that sometimes even political orientations are very different.

How do you forge this whole notion of Latino unity, a Hispanic kind of consciousness? That's an issue. I think we always constantly have to address, and our leadership has to address across the country and here. Because if we can't mobilize ourselves politically, in a way that projects the needs of the community accurately, then legislatively I think we're going to run into problems in terms of translating those political kinds of demands into legislation.

I was involved in a project of the Latino National Political Survey, which was very controversial. It was a survey we did of Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and Cubans across the country.

And one of our findings was, in fact, that in terms of this kind of Latino consciousness that we —when we ask people, there was more of a consciousness in terms of their preference, in terms of what to call themselves, according to their own national origin group, not so much as Latinos.

But one of the things that we did find was that when you look at the U.S. born versus foreign born, that as you go into a second generation, there is a dramatic increase in the percentage of Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, and Cubans who do start identifying with terms like Latino and Hispanic, so that the movement is in that direction, but it's not there yet.

And I think it is a question of our leadership posing questions — political questions, legislative questions — in a way that try to understand that the Latino is a consciousness that's in the process of becoming. It's not there yet. And that we have to be very careful in the way we frame questions, and the kinds of ways that we respect the diversity within the Latino community.

On issues like NAFTA, for example, right now, clearly we see different approach — when you look at Latinos in the Northeast versus let's say the Mexican-American community on this issue. And that comes out of people's concrete historical experiences. It is not simply a political disagreement. It has a lot of complex factors involved.

How do we take that into account? How do we factor that in, as we look at legislative priorities, as we look at political mobilization?

Those are, I think, some of the challenges as we go into the — you know, the year 2000 and beyond, that I think are kind of — kind of exciting, kind of interesting, but also raise the question about what do these projections mean.

If this is not a community that's going to be working together, then these projections don't mean a damn thing, so — in terms of their impact.

So I think we need to — those are the types of questions that we need to start really discussing seriously and continuously. Let me just throw that on the table.

Ms. Salazar: Thank you, Mr. Falcon. I think we should give the opportunity to Congressman Pastor and to Congressman Bonilla because maybe they would have to go and do a voting, or something.

We celebrate Nydia Velázquez' entrance into Congress. What we shouldn't celebrate is the fact that two Puerto Ricans from New York is not the correct number in Congress.

Congressman Pastor: Go vote.

Ms. Salazar: Right. So we should give them the opportunity first.

Congressman Pastor: You'll hear bells. And we're — when you do hear them, we are given about 15 minutes, sometimes a little longer, to go vote. So if we get up, we'll come back. It's just because that's part of our job to vote.

I agree with Mr. Falcon in that obviously there are differences based on our ethnic makeup. Mexican-Americans from the Southwest obviously are not that aware of the desires of the Puerto Rican, in terms of what's going to happen to Puerto Rico, whether you have statehood, commonwealth status, or independence. And we respect that, that that's an issue that is there, but we need to get more information. But we, as Mexican-Americans, shouldn't even be getting involved.

But there are issues which Serrano, and I, and Mr. Falcon, and Bonilla, and all the — all the people who are in elected office, can agree on.

To just give you one fact, and this was given by the census, that single parent mothers with children make up 60 percent of the families in poverty. That's just a fact. That translates into Puerto Rico, Miami, Denver, Los Angeles.

But what can we do? Well, I think those of us here in the Congress, and those of you who are not elected officials, but have impacts — obviously, I think, all of you are politically motivated — what are we doing to deal with child support? Are we making it easier for that single parent and in this case, a Hispanic single parent, are we making it easier for her to bring up kids and make sure that the spouse who has left is paying for them. I mean, that's legislation.

It can be done congressionally. It can be done at the State Legislature. And we know, by a fact, that this population is living in poverty, and so what we ought to do, as Hispanics, because we have a large population that falls in this category, we ought to do everything we can to insure we have good child support legislation. And you can advocate it in your state, and you can advocate it nationally, but it is an issue that affects some families — 60 percent that live in poverty.

How do you forge this whole notion of Latino unity, a Hispanic kind of consciousness?

The other fact that was given. Children under 18, 41 percent are living in poverty. Atrocious that our kids are living in poverty. And like you said, this is going to be our work force in the future, whether we live in Denver, or Chicago. We ought to be concerned that our kids, 41 percent of them, are living in poverty.

What do we do? Well, in this Congress, when — I'll give you another little fact, and hopefully you'll attend the education session later on today, with — hopefully Congressman Becerra.

In the United States, we have the Elementary/Secondary Act. And that is to help our children get educated.

And we have Chapter 1. And Chapter 1 moneys are — should be used to address kids — children in poverty.

Here is what happens to us. The formula that is being used, which usually is in a county-wide formula, they use our children, who are in poverty, to get the money county-wide. And then what happens? Does it go to the school that needs it the most? No. Because then it is taken out through the whole system and the money is not given to where it should be given, to our children.

So this year, we are going to go through the reauthorization of Elementary/Secondary Act, and one of the issues is going to be should we change the formula for Chapter 1.

And Congressman Becerra has come forward with some legislation that all of us ought to support, whether you live in California, or Texas, or Chicago, because right now that formula is not addressing our kids. It should be targeted to the local school districts where the poverty is.

And so hopefully, when you go back to your particular states, and you see this legislation being introduced, you can talk to your congresswoman, or your congressman, and say, "Would you please support this change in the formula so that the money can go to where the kids need it the most."

So we can all get involved legislatively to correct some of the facts that were given to us this morning. And I agree with Congressman Serrano. We have to be politically active.

As Congressman Serrano, or other candidates, run for Congress, what we need to do is to develop a Hispanic network, where he can come to Phoenix and raise money. I can go to other states and raise money so that we can help each other.

And so there are things we can do and we should do them. Thank you.

Ms. Salazar: Congressman Bonilla, please.

Congressman Bonilla: Thank you. My name is Henry Bonilla. I represent the 23rd Congressional District in the state of Texas, which includes parts of San Antonio, and goes west 500 miles to the edge of El Paso, and south along the Mexican border, starting in Laredo, and going 600 miles due west along the Rio Grande, including many communities along the border that are close to 100 percent Hispanic.

My district, overall, is about 62 percent Hispanic, so I have the privilege of representing a community — a Hispanic community — that is very similar, in so many ways, even though it spans 58,000 square miles, very similar to the neighborhood I grew up in, which was a majority Hispanic, in the southern part of San Antonio.

I think that the subject that's being discussed here is very important, and that is how to get our ethnic group more involved legislatively — into the next century, as we become the largest minority group.

Voter participation is absolutely critical. I can remember days when our former mayor, Henry Cisneros, would be walking the Hispanic neighborhoods in San Antonio, trying to generate more voter turnout in Hispanic neighborhoods. And as we all know here, the turnout is historically much lower in neighborhoods like that.

And I can remember how concerned we all were that in spite of maximum effort, with someone with his high profile, and energy, and the effort that he made in areas like that, that still the voter turnout was not what he would like to see it, and what many of the rest of us would like to see as well.

I've talked for many, many hours, into the night, until I'm blue in the face in some cases, trying to point that out to Hispanics, like my grandmother, for example, who is 80 years old, and didn't vote for the first time until she was 75. And because — for some reason there is a feeling of inferiority that we need to overcome in neighborhoods throughout this country, that for some reason that our vote we think in some neighborhoods is not as important as someone's vote in New England, or in California, or in Florida, or in Michigan, or whatever.

But we — the more we can — as I traveled my district, trying to let everyone know that your vote matters just as much as anyone that lives in a different part of the country, that that person, regardless of economic differences, or educational differences, doesn't have any more of a say when they go to the polls than you do.

So if we can get that message out continuously in our communities, that's going to be a big factor as we approach the next century with a growing population.

I think one of the things that will help that as well, are efforts like we have in the Hispanic Caucus to try to bring — find common ground with our different ethnic groups.

Being Mexican-American, I have certainly learned by working with our Hispanic Caucus, more about the Puerto Rican community, and more about the Cuban-American community. And one thing that I must commend our chairman for, Congressman Serrano, is that he has been extremely open-minded, and welcomed the Republicans, of which we are now three on the caucus, to this whole process.

And unlike other groups or interests that are often on Capitol Hill, that spend a lot of time infighting, we have a very good group that works well together and it is a great credit to our chairman, Mr. Serrano, who is always inclusive, rather than exclusive, about the different opinions that are brought to the caucus.

And there are things we agree on, but they are often things that we disagree on. But, nonetheless, we always keep the avenues of communication open, so that we can all work together and learn more about our cultures in different parts of the country, because if we maintain the differences that currently exist between these three primary groups within the Hispanic community, this — this majority power that we could have, going into the next century, will be diluted as it is now. So that's something that's very important.

I also think that we also, in trying to get the different ethnic groups together, to focus on issues that bring us together, rather than set us apart.

I, for example, am very, very high on the small business aspect of this — what's happening in this country. And small businesses, whether you come from Florida, New York, or California, or Texas, are something that we should all, as Hispanic-Americans, be concerned about and do everything we can to mobilize our small business workers, our small business owners, and to deal with the issues that create more employment in our communities. That's something that's critical, regardless of what part of the country you live in.

So — also other economic issues, like taxes, and things that affect our economy, like mandates, that we need to be careful of, because, as you know, and regardless of what part of the country you come from, when we talk about drugstores, and auto parts stores, and restaurants, and small businesses of that nature, that many Hispanics are involved in, either as employees or owners, those are the issues that really cut across every region and ethnic line, and every part of the country that you can imagine.

So those are some areas that I think we can certainly work together, whether we are Cubans, Puerto Ricans, or Mexican-Americans, and can find common ground in to work and mobilize our forces going into the next century.

So I appreciate you giving me the opportunity to come here today, and would be happy to answer any questions, if there are any, before we have to go vote.

Mexican-Americans from the Southwest obviously are not that aware of the desires of the Puerto Ricans, in terms of what's going to happen to Puerto Rico...

Ms. Salazar: Thank you to the three congressmen. Now I think we can go ahead with the rest of the panel, if we can start with Mr. Lisandro Perez. Do you have any comments, please?

Dr. Perez: Thank you, very much. I appreciate the opportunity to say these comments, particularly after what Congressman Bonilla said, because I want to follow those same themes that he was talking about, and I'll say only a few things for a few minutes here to allow more opportunity for discussion.

I thank the organizers for this invitation. I agree with Angelo Falcon also that, per se, the numbers — don't mean anything. That is the fact that we'll be, you know, whatever numbers of millions in the year 2020, and so forth. It doesn't mean anything unless there is, I think, the appropriate political organization that — the type of coalition building that needs to take place.

I would argue that — and again, I'm a sociologist, so you know, sociologists tend to see —rather than solutions, sometimes we tend to see problems, but that's a good balance.

And I certainly agree with Congressman Bonilla that — the emphasis needs to be on finding common ground.

I would say that in order to find common ground, we need to really, really understand the differences. That is, that if we're going to try to build on a common sort of Latino agenda, so to speak, we need to understand what those differences are.

And let me say what are some of the things that we need to take into account as we try to — the differences we need to take into account.

...when you go back to your particular states, and you see this legislation being introduced, you can talk to your congresswoman, or your congressman and say, "Would you please support his change in the formula so that the money can go to where the kids need it the most[?]"

As Dr. del Pinal indicated, the Latino population is not evenly distributed in the U.S. That is, in part, a source of strength because it is a strength in key electoral states. Seventy-five percent, three-fourths of the Latino population in the United States, lives in just five states. And that means that, therefore, there is a tremendous voice of Latinos in those states.

It also means, however, that those five states are not together in the same place. They are in the Southwest. They are in California. They are in Texas. They are in New York. They are in Florida. And there is tremendous geographic differences, not only in terms of geography, but also in terms of just cultures, and the world of California, and Texas, and New York, and Miami, are not the same, are not the same.

As our students who go to FIU, and who have been raised in Miami all these years, when they go out, they discover that the world — Miami is not the world, so to speak. And they find that it is a very different world out there. And so there is a difference, if you will, or those distinctions of geography.

I think also, frankly, we talk here about the label of Latino. We are all aware of the weakness —not the weakness — but the pitfalls of the label, in the sense that it is a mega-label, and Jorge del Pinal presented some of the figures on the importance, of course, of immigration in making up our Latino population and accounting for a great deal of the growth as well.

Generally, immigrants don't identify with the label of Latino when they come in. You know, someone who comes in from Honduras, or from Nicaragua, or from Mexico, whatever, they discover they are Latino when they arrive here. You know, when they arrive here, they are Mexican, they are Colombians, they are Nicaraguans, all right. It's only when they get here that they find out they are Latino, or Hispanic, and even — Hispanic, so to speak.

I've seen the T-shirts in California that say, you know, "No soy Hispano. Soy Chicano." And there are bumper stickers in Miami, I've seen them, that say, "No — yo soy Cubano." And these identifications with more national origin labels.

And I say this because I think to some extent it is easier for a group of congressmen/women to forge a coalition here on Capitol Hill when they are aware of what those common interests are.

It is a much more difficult task to force —to, in a sense, forge those coalitions in the communities, and at the grassroots level, when people sometimes have identification with that national origin. And not only that, but agendas from their countries of origin.

And here I would present an example that I even hesitate to present because it is embarrassing, but some of you may be aware that about a month or three weeks ago, there were demonstrations in Miami, in front of the Mexican Consulate, with respect to the expatriation of eight rafters who arrived in the Yucatan Peninsula from Cuba and were deported by the Mexican government back to Cuba. Eventually they came back, but there were tremendous demonstrations in Miami on that, and some of the hotheads in the demonstration burned a Mexican flag.

That — although many leaders in the Cuban community apologized for that, and decried the event, it set up a tremendous, again, friction between the two communities, between the number of Mexicans living there and the Cubans.

We need to be aware. These things should not surprise us. We need to be aware, in a sense, that there are these differences. And that difference, again, was rooted in differences originated by different agendas of the countries of origin, if you will. And I think we need to sort of understand that.

And when I say "understanding," let me just finish, in many ways, by saying something that is self-serving. And after all, we're on Capitol Hill, where people come with their agendas, so let me go ahead and pitch that.

And when I say "understanding," I think I'm also talking a great deal of the kind of research that we need, not only — it is not just enough to have, in many ways, the numbers, and the votes, and so forth.

There are many, many congressmen that are not Latinos, and who are not going to see things the way Latinos see it. There are 100 senators, you know, who are not Latino, that need to be convinced. There are state legislators around the country, in which most state legislators, again, are not a majority Latino by a long shot. And they need to be convinced of — if you have a particular piece of legislation, if you have something that you're pushing, that your communities are pushing, either here on The Hill, or in the state capitols. They need to have the facts.

You're going to have ten, 15 minutes with someone in an office, and you say, "We need this piece of legislation because A, B, and C, and D, because Latinos have this situation," et cetera.

And what I'm saying is that we need to have a better awareness of our reality through research. And many of you here on The Hill are aware of this. And others of you, of course, are aware, but there is a very growing sector of the Latino population affiliated with our universities, affiliated with community centers, that do research.

Our Cuban Research Institute is part of the Inter-University Program for Latino Research, for example, which is an entire network of research centers at some of our top universities in the U.S.

There are the research branches of the various groups here in Washington. There is the groups that, for example, like Angelo represents, the Latino policy centers, who are day to day working on analyzing the reality of Latinos. And if we can join that, I think,

which we've been trying to do with the work that needs to take place in Washington, and in the state capitols, we'll go a long ways toward advancing that agenda, always taking into account those things about us that are important, including our differences. And I think that's — I think that's the key to success in the legislative process. Thank you.

Ms. Salazar: Anna Santiago.

Dr. Santiago: I'm glad that Dr. Perez came before me because I'm also going to focus on knowing more about the diversity of the community, because this diversity has very serious policy implications, which we often tend to ignore.

We seem to think that — and often times our publications would indicate that we are a monolithic community, and we're not.

There is about three dozen different Latino subgroups in the United States. And each of these subgroups have experienced a different pattern of migration, of settlement, and incorporation within the larger U.S. community.

As a result, we have to seriously consider that there is — there is the differences of needs amongst those sub-populations.

While we can highlight the commonalities that exist amongst the groups, to forge coalitions, as has been alluded to by several of the panelists, we really need to look at those differences in order to provide us with the foundation for exploring alternative approaches to meeting these kind of needs.

For example, when we talk about issues of poverty, and where the poverty rate for the Latino population — and the aggregate is about two and a half times that for Anglos — poverty is a very, very serious problem amongst Puerto Ricans, where it is four times the rate of Anglos. Mexican poverty is about the same as the average, about two and a half percent. And then Cuban poverty rates are much, much lower. And we need to look at that very seriously.

Going along with that kind of illustration, if poverty for the different subgroups has been generated by different means, we need to look at how we approach solving the problem of poverty.

If poverty amongst Mexicans is related to low wage work, that's an issue we have to address. That's different than if we argue that poverty amongst Puerto Ricans reflects basically being pushed out, in some ways, out of the labor force, and amongst women with small children and not being able to work, and that's a whole different approach to addressing the issue.

For Cubans, as poverty is generated by the fact that it is mainly concentrated amongst the elderly, it's another issue altogether as well. And we need to be — we need to be looking at that.

Because of the conversations that we've already had and the presentation by Jorge del Pinal, it is also important that we have to extend this discussion of diverse groups to look at the new Central and South American populations that are here, because it is not anymore just the Puerto Rican, a Cuban, or a Mexican set of problems that we need to be addressing.

Another issue that I'm certainly — would like to correspond with Dr. Perez is that we need research and we need data, and we need to support data collection efforts that look at Latino sub-populations.

There is something legislatively that the Congressional Hispanic Congress — Caucus — can actually do for us. We need to not only authorize, which the Congress has done, the funding of the Latino Panel Study of Income Dynamics Sample, we have to appropriate funds for that sample.

Currently we are — we have collected three years of longitudinal data. It's the only source of data that has a wide spectrum of Latinos, including immigrant Latinos, that exists in the United States. And we are at risk of losing that data source in the next year, because we have inadequate funding.

And I just wanted to make a comment about what we can get from that data. The first three years of that data is being released in October. And one of the things that we have found —for example, you talk about child poverty. Forty-five percent of Mexican children, 48 percent of Puerto Rican children, and 28 percent of Cuban children, had been in poverty at least one of their last three years.

If we look at the longitudinal aspect of that data, we find that 16 percent of Mexican children were poor all three years. Twenty-nine percent of Puerto Rican children were poor all three years. And nine percent of Cuban children were poor all three years.

We need to have that data if we want to try to see what is happening and what are the processes that generate these kind of situations for the groups that we are concerned with here.

Also, I'd like to add, when we are looking at public policies, we have to go beyond focus on just universal programs that have been based predominantly on non-Hispanic white, or non-Hispanic black experiences.

Traditionally, the welfare programs that we have in this country have used those models to forge the kind of programs that exist today, but they may be totally inappropriate for Latino populations. We don't know that, but we need to know that.

And small businesses, whether you come from Florida, New York, or California, or Texas, are something that we should all, as Hispanic-Americans, be concerned about...

And we need to stop equating the Latino experience with that for African-Americans and whites. There may be commonalities of experience, but there is a lot of differences that we need to be aware of.

Thank you.

Ms. Salazar: Mr. Falcon, if you'd like to add something else, or we go to Sílvia Pedraza.

Mr. Falcon: Let me — this is quick thing. I came all the way from New York, so I'm all excited about this.

No. The other thing, in terms of the data, just to make that pitch as well, because I think it is something I'd like to see our Latino Congress people look at, is

that when we look at how some of the debates take place here — for example, the debate on welfare reform that was the — you know, a few years back — the panel study on income dynamics was just discussed, for example, was an important source to help define the terms of that debate.

Now, what happened is that — that data set, which is based at the University of Michigan, was started in 1968, to look — track the same families over a period of time, to get a sense of what's happening to family — the American family.

Now, what happened in '68 is that they over sampled blacks, but they didn't over sample Latinos.

So the result is, up until 1990, you had this data set that was being used as the basis for all sorts of discussions around welfare reform, and we weren't in the data. Basically, there weren't enough of us in the data to be — to be able to say anything.

Now, through the study that I mentioned, the Latino National Political Survey, we did a sample, and we were able to convince and work with the people in Michigan, and work with some people here in Congress, to try to get an appropriation, to use our sample as the Latino sample in this data set. We were able to do that, get some initial monies, and now we're at a point where the whole project may just die.

There are other data sets. For example, there is the National Election Study, also at the University of Michigan, that gets a tremendous amount of money from the National Science Foundation, just like this does as well, the PSID. It doesn't have Latinos in it.

So that when these studies that are funded with a lot of federal money — I think we pay taxes, too. Yes, I pay mine.

What happens is that we're completely left out of the picture, so that these professors who are doing these studies on American political participation, why don't people — Americans participate. Well, we're not even in there.

...poverty is a very, very serious problem amongst Puerto Ricans, where it is four times the rate of Anglos. Mexican poverty is about the same as the average, abut two and a half percent. And then Cuban poverty rates are much, much lower.

Meanwhile, this is being funded by tax monies. And so what happens is that many times these data sets — it's not simply a question of, you know, it's nice so these professors can do all these studies, and all this stuff. But many times these data sets drive a lot of discussions, help here set the terms of the debates, and if we're not in there, then we're not discussed, our issues are not dealt with as seriously as they are of other groups.

So that I think — I would like to see the Congressional Hispanic Caucus actually, maybe, do an assessment to try to find a way of studying or getting a sense of what's happening, in terms of our representation, not just in the census data, but also in federally funded kinds of data sets, like the National Election Study, and like the panel study on income dynamics, and also the health studies.

You know, there was a Hispanic — and then there was very little follow-up, in terms of having Latino health statistics as well.

So there is a whole range of issues like that that I think become very important in terms of providing the data, critical data, that we need, in terms of helping to set legislative agenda.

As our students who go to FIU, and who have been raised in Miami all these years, when they go out, they discover that ...Miami is not the world...they find out that it is a very different world out there.

So I would just basically second what the previous two speakers, you know, have said about those things. We'll just move on.

Ms. Pedraza: It is getting increasingly difficult to say anything that hasn't been said already.

But I guess I will try to argue that it is possible for the various Latino groups to develop both separate agendas and the common agenda.

And like my colleagues before me, who are sociologists, and academics, and researchers, of course I believe that at the root of this is social research, because in order to first develop proper social policy that will impact the several groups, and the groups jointly, you have to first have a good analysis of what is the nature of the social problem with respect to both theory and data.

I also attended the same conference that Anna Santiago just attended this past weekend at the University of Michigan on the data supplied by the Latino supplement of the PSID, the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, so I know that the data is very much fresh in our minds.

And, for example, one of the papers that was presented at this conference, not mine — I happened to be a discussant for it, so that's why it is on my mind — the paper was done by Peter Caton, who is a Puerto Rican economist, working at the Bureau of the Labor Statistics. And he compared poverty rates among Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, and Cubans.

So it was a disaggregated analysis and not one where the total Hispanic population is looked at at one time together.

And basically, what — he showed first, that the levels of poverty are rather high in the Puerto Rican, the Mexican, and also the Cuban community, much against the stereotypes that there are no poor Cubans. There are lots of them.

But that, in fact, the meaning of poverty in each of the groups is different. That with Puerto Ricans, poverty has a lot to do with lack of jobs, and female heads — women alone in poverty, on welfare, raising children, as has already been mentioned.

In the case of Mexicans, poverty has more to do not with unemployment, welfare, and single motherhood,

but in fact, it has to do with getting low wages for, in fact, being employed, but employed at very low wages.

And in the case of Cubans, poverty is very much concentrated among old people and as well as on recent arrivals, people who have arrived from Cuba since the 1980 Mariel exodus, the famous or infamous Mariel exodus, that has since released waves, and waves of Cuban arrivals that are, in fact, extremely poor.

It's impossible to pick up the Miami Herald these days without seeing the photograph of a balsaro on the front page, someone who came over on a raft from Cuba, many of whom have drowned.

So that all the communities are furthermore impacted, in terms of poverty by the extent and the nature of the migration to the different groups.

So it seems to me that if we take, you know, that sort of thing, where we should all be concerned about poverty, and yet, in fact, the meaning of poverty, and the way that poverty manifests itself is vastly different in each of the groups, then we should have all Latinos together press, you know, government and the United States to do something about poverty.

But through the Puerto Ricans, we should be able to press for good poverty policy, family policies in particular, and employment policies.

Through Mexicans, we should be able to press for decent and humane immigration policies that mean that we don't have such a huge component of illegals that are still a shadow labor force in American society.

And through the Cubans, we ought to be able to press for better policy, I think, for old age — for old people which, you know, we will all someday become.

And so I think it is possible, in fact, to develop separate and common agendas at the same time. And as we do that, I think, as we gain a greater understanding of ourselves, we should be able to do that. Thank you.

Ms. Salazar: Rogelio Saenz, would you like to add something.

Dr. Saenz: Thank you. The rise of the Latino population in the United States to the status of the largest minority group in the early parts of the 21st Century, I think is going to represent significant opportunities for the ethnic group. But they are also going to represent very major challenges.
And I think right now, given the socioeconomic status of the Latino population, the low socioeconomic status, particularly in the case of Mexican-Americans and Puerto Ricans, it is — we run the risk of not taking full advantage of this position that Latinos will hold.

My response emphasizes the investment in individuals, as well as the investment in communities in which Latinos live.

In addition, there are particular segments of the Latino population that have traditionally been neglected and these are groups that also need to be paid more attention to.

And in addition, as some of my other colleagues here on the panel have suggested, is that there needs to be the creation of bridges linking the different Latino populations together.

Now, in terms of the challenges that we have for us today, the challenges, I think, stem from the fact that we have a population that tends to have a very high poverty rate, where you have more than one in four Latino families with incomes under the poverty level.

Even more disturbing is the fact that there are two out of every five children, Latino children, who are living in poverty. This signifies that there are children in our Latino community that are growing up today with inadequate resources to prepare them to become fully productive members of an increasingly technological, increasingly global labor force in the 21st Century.

This is disturbing, given the fact that the two groups in the U.S. that are growing the most rapidly tend to be minorities, especially Latinos, than the other group within the population that is growing very rapidly, and will grow very rapidly in the coming years, are the elderly population, composed primarily of Anglos.

So that, increasingly, the U.S. labor force is going to depend on Latino children to provide the social, as well as the economic viability for this country.

So that it is incumbent upon policy makers, incumbent upon educators, and other leaders of the community, to pay special attention to investing in the future of these particular individuals. And this is not a handout because it represents an investment for this country.

There was a commercial back several —probably in the last decade that showed a mechanic telling a potential customer, "You can pay me now, or pay me later." This is a situation that is very relevant in the case of Latino children. If we don't invest in this population, we're not — not only we, as the Latino population, are going to be suffering because we lack the vision to invest in the education of this population, but the nation as a whole is going to also suffer.

Forty-five percent of Mexican children, forty-eight percent of Puerto Rican children, and twenty-eight percent of Cuban children had been in poverty at least one of their last three years.

And this is especially the case. Right now we have the jobs that are growing very — the most rapidly tend to be those that require a high level of education, so that we have a major portion of our community that is ill-prepared to step in and do those types of jobs. So the investment in humans, and the investments in children, is very important.

In addition, I think the fact that Latinos represent a very large population and one that is expanding very rapidly, it represents opportunities. Opportunities because this group is growing rapidly, and in addition we see the narrowing of the economic bridges between the United States and Latin America, especially Mexico.

So I see this representing opportunities for the development of entrepreneurs within the Latino community because you have people who are going to

have access to fellow ethnics, who represent a large and growing consumer market.

So that we also have to invest in the communities in which people live, because we can have people who are very skilled, very educated, but if they live in areas that have very few employment opportunities, they run the risk of being in poverty, much more so than those that lived in more — areas that are much more economically viable.

In the past what community leaders have attempted to do is to chase external businesses with carrots being in the form of cheap labor, the absence of unions, a whole host of concessions and so forth. So that these external businesses have been in a very advantageous position in — with respect to a buyer's market.

But the employment that they bring in, in many cases tends to be short-lived because there are other communities, both in the U.S., as well as abroad, that may provide even cheaper labor, and those jobs then get exported.

Now, one of the strategies that some communities have been doing is to develop the notion of home grown community development, where it is the residents themselves that are engaged in bringing about the creation of employment. Because if you have residents of the community then, they are much more loyal to the community. They also have an attachment, so that the jobs that are generated by this home grown type of situations tend to be much more long term.

...many times these data sets drive a lot of discussions, help here set the terms of the debates, and if we're not in there, then we're not discussed, our issues are not dealt with as seriously as ...other groups.

So that there has to be an investment in the communities. There has to be an education of the Latinos, with respect to opportunities for self-employment. There has to be much more financial assistance for these people to begin their businesses and so forth, and to tap the opportunities that, in many cases, we are not tapping at this point.

Finally, in terms of creating the bridges, we cannot fool ourselves into believing that this large group that is going to represent the majority, represents a monolithic, homogeneous population. But rather we have to recognize our differences and we have to work with those differences.

And these differences are exacerbated in the fact that you have — the largest groups tend to be located in different parts of the country, and as a result, they have very little understanding of each other. So that efforts to bring the different groups together have to be encouraged and fostered. Thank you.

Ms. Salazar: Dr. del Pinal, would you like to add something to your presentation?

Dr. Del Pinal: I think there is not much that I can add. Everybody else has been very eloquent in describing the information that I presented, so I'll pass.

Ms. Salazar: What about Congressman Pastor, or Congressman —

Congressman Pastor: I have one question to Mr. del Pinal.

Back in the '70s somebody discovered the word "Hispanic" and I know that was — came in the census. I came from Mexican-American — I was something before then, and then I became Mexican-American, now a Hispanic. It's interesting how the census created this whole phenomenon.

Dr. Del Pinal: Well, actually, we did it at the behest of Congress because we had a lot of congressional leaders come to us and say, "We need more information about this group," and we didn't know what to call it.

So somebody had a dictionary handy and pulled it out — this is lore, because it is not written anywhere. But they opened up the dictionary and saw Hispanic having to do with Hispanic origin, which is what they decided was the common feature that you could group this in.

So it's been a process in trying to develop something that makes sense. And now we have all these fine academics tearing that down and saying it's worthless, throw it out.

And it does — you know, when you put out a statistical category like that, it does take a life of its own, and I think that's why we're here. We're under the banner of Hispanic Caucus, so the name is there for official purposes, and we can certainly change it if that's your desire.

Congressman Serrano: If I may, I just have a couple of comments, but I'll preface it by just commenting on Mr. del Pinal's comments.

It's amazing how the whole thing of Hispanic and how we've been categorized comes into play, because there is now a lot of nervousness about whether indeed we are Hispanic or not, whether we are Latino or not, whether we should just have every single name put out. But that's, in fact, part of the conversation, part of what makes us different.

And what was said before to me is the most important part. What role we can all play in dealing with our differences, so that they become strengths, rather than the kind of hindering that will just keep us apart.

For instance, as a Puerto Rican, I try every day to try to understand what it must feel like to be an immigrant who comes in without American citizenship. And I will never be able to really know what it is to be an immigrant, or a non-documented immigrant.

On the other hand, a Colombian will never know what it's like to be a citizen treated as a second, or a third-class citizen. A Colombian will never know what it's like to live in Puerto Rico, as an American citizen, get drafted when the draft comes back, get mobilized during the Persian Gulf War, and then come back and find that he can't vote for the Commander-in-Chief that sent him to the war in the first place.

A Puerto Rican will never understand what it must be like to be a Cuban exile for political reasons.

A Cuban will probably never know what it's like to be an American citizen exile within your own island, such as a lot of independent — have been for many years within the Puerto Rican community.

And so, how and who begins to educate us? I would say that in many ways, the Hispanic media, and the press, plays a major responsibility.

People have said that media in general is not supposed to play a role in getting involved in these things. They should report the news.

Well, I don't think that the Hispanic media has the luxury of just reporting the news. It has to be involved as social agents.

And what I see on the news, and I know this is a touchy subject — I checked for a month's period. I videotaped when I couldn't watch, and I checked the two networks, Spanish newscasts. And I found out, on many occasions, more than half of the time allotted outside commercials was to issues of Latin American countries, but nothing about those Latin American countries' communities within the 50 states.

Now, it's important to keep us informed as to what's happening in these Latin countries, but for our purposes here, I need to know more of what those communities are doing inside this country. And to try then to bring out the information that will help us at least work on those issues we can agree on, and put aside those two or three that will just destroy us and not agree on.

I guess the best comment today that I heard, which I deal with every day, is the fact that so many of us deal within this society, based on agendas we have from our places of origin, which then create tensions based on that particular agenda and not on the local agenda.

And so I think we all have to become agents of change in educating ourselves to each other, to understand who we are.

I came to Congress thinking I knew a lot about Mexican-Americans. After all, I grew up in New York, and in New York, you went to — the Spanish movies were all Mexican movies, and 50 percent of the Spanish music was Mexican music. And what I found out was that I knew a lot about Mexico, very little about Mexican-Americans.

And to find people who were treated as third-class citizens, when their great-grandfather had been born here, not just their grandfather, and their father, and themselves, but their great-grandfather, was a total shock to me.

But on the other hand, there were people in Puerto Rico who have had their whole existence under the American flag. Something as simple as there are Mexicans and Mexican-Americans; there are Cubans, and Cuban-Americans; there are Colombians and Colombian-Americans; but there are no Puerto Rican-Americans. There are only Puerto Ricans.

Or Americans. And so I call on the media; I call on those professors that Angelo Falcon always refers to in his statements; to begin to concentrate more and more on educating all of us. And when we disagree on those issues that are just too difficult to agree on, then put them aside for awhile because they usually will be issues having to do with our places of origin and not health care, or housing, or education, or those kinds of things.

Another thing, and one last point. The media plays an important role and has a problem based on a need that exists in this country. As we progress within the society, as we move within the society, we find more and more that our youngsters are English dominant.

...in fact, the meaning of poverty in each of the groups is different. That with Puerto Ricans, poverty has to do with lack of jobs...In the case of Mexicans, poverty has more to do...with getting low wages..

Therefore, more and more of the people who are in front of TV cameras and writing articles are directly traveled from one of our Latin countries, facing a Latin community here that sometimes has no interest in what they are reporting.

So everything from how they phrase certain words in front of the camera, which — says, "What did he say," to the whole approach — I mean, this is —this is a fascinating subject and a very painful subject, and it is the whole subject of this weekend conference, to accept the fact that there is a major difference amongst all of us, and then to move from there and to get away from the day when we lie to ourselves, lie to the media, and allowed everybody to lie to us, by saying we are one. We are not one. We're many that have more in common than other groups have in common.

Growing up in New York, I think I — that Mexicanos and Puerto Ricans have more in common than Italians and Irish, even though they were Catholic and we all speak the same language. We put that together, and we understand that we are different, and that what goals are for our places of origins are different.

My goal for my place of origin is self-determination. Either to decide to stay closer to this country, or to move away. That's not the discussion for Mexican-Americans ever.

Mr. Falcon: You're not talking about the South Bronx?

Congressman Serrano: No. I was just talking about your institution.

With that typical Angelo Falcon comment, I will close. Thank you.

Ms. Salazar: Thank you. Thank you, Congressman. As a member of the press, I can tell you, and I'm sure that my colleague, Ricardo, we struggle with that problem all the time between the national news and the international news. And would you like to say something about that, Ricardo?

Mr. Brown: If I may, I have found this discussion here very enlightening, especially Congressman Serrano's comments. This is something that I think Gustav Mariel, also one of our colleagues, shares. And I think the media should —the Hispanic media, Spanish language media, in this country, they should reflect the reality of Latinos who live here.

And it makes sense, and it makes for better ratings even. I think — you know, I have traveled throughout this vast geography, and I have found, yes, we do have

a lot of diversity. There is also a lot of common ground, like Angelo Falcon said.

And I find that people in Miami, for example, are very much interested in knowing what people in L.A., or people up in New York, or in Chicago, are doing, about community life in those particular cities. So I really appreciate the congressman's remarks.

...there are children in our Latino community that are growing up today with inadequate resources to prepare them to become fully productive members of an increasingly technological, increasingly global labor force in the 21st century.

I do have a recommendation, though. We in the media, we try to struggle for this. A lot of us, as individual reporters, who cover the country, and who have the privilege of meeting people throughout the different communities but, you know, sometimes we are all alone. We never hear from community groups. We never hear either criticism or praise, and we need that. And especially our bosses need it.

So, thank you, very much, Congressman Serrano.

I guess we'll move on to our discussion now and the audience is free to ask questions, comment. The panel members are free to join in.

Ms. Salazar: This gentleman has been waiting for a long time, so I think he is going to be the first one.

Mr. Brown: Okay. And if you could, please identify yourself, briefly.

Ms. Salazar: Yes, and your name.

Mr. Morindo: I'm Gilbert Morindo. I'm the Executive Director of OMMA. It's the state of Texas' largest Hispanic non-profit.

I want to make a quick comment, and then a question related to redistribution of resources. And I think, like Mr. Pinal (sic) said, we're seeing the same demographics in Texas. Again, the population is going to double over the next 25 years. We project that 80 percent of the Hispanics will be in eight major urban areas. Again, an extremely young population.

I work with a group that does a lot with youth. We run a high school for Hispanic dropouts. One of the nation's most successful programs. And obviously our focus is youth.

And yet, one of the things that we're really dealing with as a non-profit is this scarce government resources, scarce foundation money, declining corporate support. And in a non-profit, trying to direct services to the

For example, I'm filing a grievance with the State of Texas at the end of the week related to AIDS funding in Houston. And in this case, there was $1.6 million in funding, and 14 percent went to minority groups, blacks and Hispanics. And yet blacks and Hispanics comprise 43 percent of the AIDS cases in Houston. Fourteen percent of the funding, 43 percent of the cases.

So you've got this huge disparity that's going to be taking place between population, problem, versus funding.

And the question I'd like to pose to the panel is how does the non-profit deal with that? How is the Latino community going to deal with this issue of this redistribution, and it goes a number of different ways. It goes, in this case, between gay male — white male organizations. It could be between Hispanics and Afro-Americans. It could be, obviously, with the Asians in that equation.

And so the question again, how do we deal with this scarce resources and a redistribution back to a growing Latino population? Thank you.

Mr. Falcon: I'll jump in. What the hell?

I think it is really a question of basically the problem we always have, and that is, how do we organize ourselves as a pressure group to make our presence felt in whatever institution it is, whether it is the United Way, that we all, I'm sure, have horror stories from throughout the country of United Way under funding of Latinos, to you know, corporate funding, or foundation changes. And these are all institutions that, again, themselves are very political as well.

And whether the AIDS issue that you raised is one that — in New York City, you have that occurring, and I'm sure it is occurring in different cities, where you have sometimes this unfortunate pitting of groups against each other. You know, the gay community versus the Latino community, the minority community. Sometimes it gets very ugly in terms of the kinds of ways that people are divided.

So the question is, how do we organize ourselves to put pressure on these institutions. And the fact is, no one is going to do it for us.

So one of the things that we have been very clear about, when we started the Institute for Puerto Rican Policy, back 11 years ago, was that when we looked at the need for changes in the redistribution of resources, and through the legislative process, we were — the model we had was the one of like the think tank, you know, that you do — you do a study, and then you have the recommendations, and supposedly somebody is supposed to say, "Oh, Jesus, we've been doing this all wrong. Thanks for bringing it to our attention. Here is another $2 billion."

Hey, it doesn't work that way. You could document stuff, but you also have to be able to back it up in terms of political pressure, and power.

I think institutions like, let's say, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda, things like that, at different levels, have to be — we have to organize at all kinds of levels, so we can start putting pressure on those types of institutions.

But to me it's always — it always comes down to a political struggle and organizing your community in a way — and your institutions — to fight for these types of issues.

So there is a need for our non-profits to ban together and to make their voices felt.

The difficulty with that is many times when, you know, you are trying to put pressure on funding sources, is you also don't want — you're in a difficult position.

So then again, as a community, how do we develop roles so that different people, different sectors of the community, can put pressure on sectors that can't get back at them.

So there is an issue of sophistication. How do we divide the labor? How do we organize ourselves? And I know from our experience in New York, and the northeast, it's an issue that we don't have a total answer to, except that, you know, that we understand that it is essentially a political question at bottom.

So I would just, you know, kind of throw that out as, I think, the dilemma that we all face.

So what you laid out, I think, we an all basically say we've been through the same thing and are as frustrated as you are.

Congressman Pastor: Before we leave that, sometimes the perception that people have is not the reality, and it is our job to inform, educate people what the reality is.

I gave you an example earlier when I talked about the Chapter 1 formula. If you look at the majority of the elementary schools, you'll find that it is because of Hispanic children that school districts are receiving Chapter 1 money. But yet, if you look at the distribution, they are getting very little.

And so I think it's our job, yours and mine, to educate the legislators that the perception they have is not the reality. And the reality today is that we need to, as we reauthorize legislation, we need to look at the formulas, not based on past histories, but current reality.

And that's where you can help. You have Congressman Craig Washington, who represents you, I'm assuming, and I think you need to educate him what the reality is and have him support legislation that would change the formula of Chapter 1, where we would get moneys where they belong, and help the Hispanic children.

Mr. Falcon: Because even that — that's I guess my point also. Chapter 1 is a good example.

For example, in New York City, there is a maldistribution of Chapter 1 moneys. You know, the relationship between the moneys and the needs is not quite clear.

And one of the reasons for that is, again, political power. That is, the Teacher's Union was able to — in New York City — through its contributions to politicians at the state legislature, and amassing power, was able to basically distort the distribution of the moneys for their own purposes.

And so, again, how do you come up — you know, one thing is, I think you could — you could deal with the formulas, but then part of it is the kind of — that kind of underlying political aspect of all these issues that cut across lines. And that's the one where, again, the issue of organizing — and sometimes it comes down to a question of raw power and trying to go out and organize people.

So these issues are all very complex and have these various layers. And it makes them all, again, that much more difficult to deal with.

Mr. Bonilla: My name is Frank Bonilla. I'm now Director of something called the Inter-University Program for Latino Research, which is an effort to build a kind of academic level coalition to do — to respond to some of the information needs that have been mentioned.

Since it came up, I just wanted to make a remark briefly about the history of Hispanic label in the census, and some of its implications.

I think it came into being and still operates, to some extent, as a denial of the kind of information that we are trying to get. That is, it was a bureaucratic category to treat us in the aggregate and it has taken 20 years to begin to get the refinement, the sub-information, that Jorge del Pinal has used so effectively here today, into place. And there are many areas in which that global label is still used as a pretext for not looking at sub-information that we now realize we need so desperately. So that in some sense we need to be aware that it was a bureaucratic creation in order to deny the detailed information that we need, rather than to assert it. And it has been only through a lot of insistent pressure that we've been able to get that breakdown.

I should also say that we need to be aware of the history of the label that the Hispanic label as such in our countries of origin and in Latin America are part of a Hispanophile ideological position, which affirms the importance of the Iberian contribution to the people and the making of Latin American countries and leaves out the Native American and African contribution to our cultures and demographics. And I think we should be aware of those. That we need to reach across more than just national differences, but many other institutional and social divisions that we need to reach across.

....as a Puerto Rican, I try every day to try to understand what it must feel like to be an immigrant who comes in without American citizenship.

Mr. Ballesteros: My name is Frank Ballesteros. I'm the Director of a non-profit program in Tucson, Arizona, called Project PEP —

I'm here to declare war, folks. We cannot afford to see headlines like "Poverty rate for Hispanics put at 29 percent." We all know what the problems are. What we need here in this three day conference is solutions.

Please, I challenge you today, the next three days, let's come up with solutions so that we don't see headlines like this anymore.

Our people are scared. There is no jobs. It seems like everything seems to be a problem. Our education is problems. Everything is a problem.

We come to here to come up for solutions. Please, I challenge you again, let's come up with solutions and let's stop talking of the problems, because we already know what the problems are. Thank you, very much.

Mr. Falcon: Yes. I'd like to challenge that because I hear that all the time. And one of the things is that, you know, probably a lot of people on this panel are probably very depressing people, because we always focus on the problems, because we feel if we don't

bring attention to the problems, nothing will be done about them.

And we always have that dilemma because — it gets depressing. Every time one of these census reports comes out, I can just see the faces of all our people across the country going, "Jesus, isn't this depressing."

And one of the problems that we have is the one of how do we strike a balance. How do we start looking at raising the issues of what the problems, the poverty rate is, the dropout rate, but at the same time, how do we start bringing in the fact that there are many people in our community who are making it, who are resources. That also can be used within our community.

And so the reason I would challenge you is —is how do we create a balance. How do we bring in that more positive aspect, that kind of resources, into the discussion.

Sometimes from our angle, because of the focus that we have, in trying to address the urgency of these serious issues, we go in that direction. Then there are other people who just, you know — the Chamber of Commerce people who just go, "Give me some capital and I'll hire some people. That's it."

So that we need to somehow have a broader picture. So I sympathize, and let me tell you, I hear that all the time from people that there is that frustration; let's get some solutions.

But what we find also, as we do the research, is that the solutions are not that simple. That they are much more complex.

And when we disagree on those issues that are just too difficult to agree on, then put them aside for a while because they usually will be issues having to do with our places of origin and not health care, or housing or education...

And sometimes we don't even know how to define the problems adequately. We don't understand why certain things happen. And that's something that I also would not want to kind of tell people that people here have the answers. We are constantly groping, trying to see the diversity, how difficult some of these issues are.

So I think that, again, I would ask for, you know, balance and recognition of what you just said, but at the same time, kind of balance it out a little bit more.

Gee, I talk a lot. I'm so sorry. It's just — I live in Brooklyn, and when I get out, I'm out of control.

Ms. Salazar: This gentleman has a comment related to what you were saying.

Lt. Commander Castaneda: My name is Lt. Commander Raul Castaneda . Let me tell you first, I'm from El Paso, Texas, and I was born and raised there for 18 years.

I come from a poverty family. My great-grandmother raised me, because my parents had me at a very young age.

But what I want to get across to you all, because the Hispanic community is very reluctant to let their sons and daughters join the military. And right now the Navy is looking for 60,000 people to hire. We're talking about youth. And our doors are not being run over and knocked down by these poverty people you're talking about.

And the biggest problem is, like I said, parents are afraid to let their kids go, because the Hispanic community, especially the Mexican-Americans —I like to talk to them — they were born and raised under the idea that the more kids they have, the less chance that they have to reach a nursing home.

By that I mean that as they get old, they'll have their kids who will be able to provide for them. And we've got to turn this misconception around.

The adults have got to let go of their kids, okay, and give them the opportunity to get an education like I have. Thank you, very much.

Mr. Falcon: Sir, would you talk to my mother?

Ms. Salazar: This next gentleman says he has a sensitive question for you, panelists.

Mr. Gurnaman: My name is Jose Paldo Gurnaman (sp. ph.). I was born in Cuba.

And in regards to the labeling of our community, our diverse community, with the term "Hispanic," I also see that there is another label which is being used and that is the term "brown."

Now, as we all know, our community is diverse. We are not all Mulatto. Black and white also is the rest of the composition of our community.

I feel like some of you sociologists might appreciate — I'm an attorney myself. This is not my field. But I feel like a marginal man sometimes.

I've always been very involved in my community, wherever I have lived, whether it is —here, you know, putting together the largest fund raiser to help immigrant Hispanics in Washington, D.C., or having lived in Chicago before, in a community where I served as a councilman and I promoted bringing in minorities to work in the municipal government, all minorities, not Cubans, or of any specific group, or just Hispanic. I wanted everyone to have a shot at jobs.

But the reason I mentioned that, I guess, you know, relatively sensitive question is because I feel sometimes like I am a marginal man, in between one community and another, and not fully accepted by either.

And by that I mean that sometimes I feel that because I am Cuban-American, that the stereotypes come into play, wherein all you are affluent, you're rich, you're Republican. And I can say that my grandfather picked cotton in 1914. He didn't stay in the United States and went to Cuba.

My mother was a maid. And I know that it is probably, you know, not fitting, necessarily, to say these things, although it may be popular to convey where one comes from, in terms of having to achieve success, but I just feel that it is a very important, you know, subject that's being raised, particularly by Silvia Pedraza, who says that not all Cubans are rich, not all Cubans are born rich. Many have had to work very hard. And I hope that we don't further divide our various communities according to

the stereotypes which, you know, perhaps might, you know, further address.

Essentially, it's a comment. I don't quite know what "brown" means.

...sometimes the perception that people have is not the reality, and it is our job to inform, educate people [on] what the reality is.

Ms. Pedraza: Can I jump in? Being a woman and it is not easy for me to jump in, but having been raised in a world of men, I guess I've learned how to do it.

I think you make different points. I think one is about the description of Latinos as brown.

It bothers me also, from the point of view that I think what happens is that American society at large is — has such a history of race relations, that it racializes people all the time.

And, therefore, it fails to recognize what I think a more profound truth, both for Americans and people of Latino, Hispanic, Latin-American extraction, which is that we're a multi-racial, multi-cultural, and multi-ethnic people, you know. And I want us to remain that way.

On the other hand, the label is, I think, political in the sense that it points to the fact that there is another major minority group, other than the black American that is fast growing, et cetera, et cetera. And it does that clumsily, like most — ethnic sort of labels do.

But in — but it bothers me insofar as it hides, I think, the true picture, which is that we are a multi-racial, multi-ethnic, and multi-everything, just like Americans also are, and have a hard time recognizing about themselves.

In terms of, you know, the stereotypes and the people that we leave out and so on, I do hope that in the process of learning to be Latinos, Hispanics, and Americans, all of which it is a process — as Angelo Falcon said, it isn't there yet, but it's in the process of making — that we cease to objectify ourselves and to work so much with stereotypes, and to strive for greater understanding, because there are many people that are left out by that objectification, I think, as you yourself pointed out.

Dr. Perez: Let me add something to that as also someone who is from Miami and a Cubano from Miami, to that.

I think that the issue of the place of Cuban-Americans within the national Latino agenda is one that's very important, but is one that — that, again, the participation of Cuban-Americans in that is more —whether or not they are part of it, or they feel like a marginal person, or whatever, is in many ways their own doing. And I go back to this issue of agenda.

The kinds of things that you've been talking about with respect to your work in the community and so forth, and your — your very presence here, has to some extent not been typical, for example, of the leading Cuban-American political organization. And that's simply the fact that there is, again, a difference of agenda.

That's going to change because I think that there is a greater transition in the Cuban-American community to a Cuban-American community, not just to a Cuban community.

But it is still a community very much dominated by an exile mentality. You know, 70 percent or so, I think 60 some, 70 percent of Cuban-Americans are actually Cuban born, and arrived here as adults from Cuba. And they still have — the primary agenda, if you will, has to do with affairs of the homeland.

And let me just do a little test here for that. We have this conference right now on Latino issues in the United States. Everyone knows that the — one of the most, if not the most powerful Cuban-American organization, not only in Miami, but especially here in Washington, and which has a presence on Capitol Hill, is the Cuban-American National Foundation.

I'd like, as a test, to just ask if there is a representative of the Cuban-American National Foundation here.

Mr. Perez: No. And I didn't expect one. Is there?

That is, that's the — some of the issues that we're talking about here is — are not — that's not their agenda. All right. That's not what their agenda is.

And I have found, overall, that those of us who are Cubanos, who have become involved, either through academic circles, or because our institute, for example, forms part of the Inter-University Program for Latino Research, that those of us who are concerned about these issues found — find really an acceptance and a very warm acceptance among Latinos — other Latinos — who seek, I think, with us, a commonality of that agenda.

So I guess what I'm saying is that if we are marginal people, to some extent, in some cases, or regarded as such, I think to some extent it is our doing.

Mr. Romero: Good afternoon. I'm Paul Taylor Romero I'm the State Legislator from New Mexico.

I've related to a lot of things that you've had to say and let me make a comment first — a couple of comments.

...in a non-profit, trying to direct services to the community, how do we deal with this redistribution of resources that ... have traditionally gone to other groups?

As a legislator from New Mexico, I've gone through having been a Spanish-American, and a Chicano, a Mexican-American, and now Mr. Pinal, maybe I'm back to Spanish-American again, because I'm a 16th generation New Mexican. So we often come back to our origins.

But I do think that we need to band together as Hispanics and see our relationships among those of us who have common descents, whether it may be Cuban, it may be Mexican, it may be Dominican Republic, or it may be someone like me, who is an Anglo-Hispanic from New Mexico.

I want to relate to the whole business of solutions because as a state legislator, I am interested in solutions. But I also have to have statistics to point out the kinds of needs that we have.

So what I do, in order to develop some cohesion, I carry most of the prenatal, maternal, early childhood

bills, and I carry most of the adult services bills, including the elderly.

The only way I can do that is with good statistics. So I have to point out the needs.

But I also have to point out the solutions and the solutions are those things which come through legislation for those people.

So I think — we need to speak of the needs and we — we have to be very decisive about that. And we have to point out the data, and the data has to be important. But we're looking to solutions as we point out the data. So I bring that to you.

I also am faced with the whole business of being a border legislator. And that's different from being a norteno in Sante Fe.

Now, the reason I get by so well is because of my — some of my fellow brothers in the north say, "Remember, Paul is one of us." That means that I'm of Hispanic origin. My name is Romero. I came from Sante Fe and Las Vegas.

So I think we have to — and that's recognized. But I also have to — I have a great deal of problems bringing the border problems to the northern part of the state. Just as we on the border in Texas, in New Mexico, and Arizona, and California, have trouble bringing border problems to the U.S. Congress, and we have great needs there, in terms of health, in terms of education, and that's one thing I hope we'll address here.

Now, the question. And it goes to Mr. Pinal. I come from a background of education. I relate to what Congressman Pastor had to say about Chapter 1.

But I also know that there is a root — also a root to that problem. And the root to that problem is that we were under counted during the 1990 census. And New Mexico has had absolutely no success in having a recount.

The Hispanics are not the only ones who are having problems, in terms of the recount. The Navajos, the Pueblos, the Apaches, are all having that same problem.

Now, projections are fine, and we need to use them as we relate to the kinds of needs we have. But if we're going to have any kind of success, in terms of taking care of the education of Hispanic children, and other minorities, we are going to have to have accurate data.

The 1990 census data is inaccurate, certainly along the border, and in other parts of the country. Is there anything, Mr. Pinal, which can be done about that?

Dr. Del Pinal: Well, there's — I mean, this is a whole can of worms. I can't begin to address it in just a few sentences.

But I would submit that even though there is an under count, that is probably not — wouldn't distort the picture that you do see with the current data.

We need to work more with that, being cognizant of it. For example, the gentleman from Houston said how do you get the statistics. There's tons of statistics from the Census Bureau coming out now about the characteristics of specific neighborhoods. And I think that's — the strength of the census is that you have that kind of information.

I think the under count issue gets distorted. It's important for political apportionment, and for redistricting voting districts, and all that, and I think it's important that the bureau continue to work to improve that. And we are looking at a lot of solutions.

But I think one of the problems that we have is people throw up their hands and say "the under count" and throw the whole thing out, when, you know, the severity of the information — of the distortion of the information due to that is — is going to be minuscule, compared to the poverty rates that this data does show the difference between say Hispanics and Anglos.

So don't — we need the work on the under count, but I don't think that should be the overriding issue in interpreting what the data tells us in arguing — policy.

...we're a multi-racial, multi-cultural and multi-ethnic people, you know. And I want us to remain that way.

I also, if you don't mind, I'd like to address Commander Castillo, is it?

Lt. Commander Castaneda: Castaneda.

Dr. Del Pinal: Castaneda. Sorry.

One of the problems you have is that you're probably not recruiting in the right places.

The second issue is that out of Latinos or Hispanics age 25 and older — you're probably going to be recruiting closer to 18, but let's just use those statistics as an illustration.

Fifty percent of Hispanics don't have a high school education. You guys don't take people without a high school education.

Lt. Commander Castaneda: We do.

Dr. Del Pinal: Oh, you do now. Well, that's — I was going to suggest that as — if you have some kind of way to remediate that, that might be a wonderful avenue to increase the opportunities of people.

And I think you'd probably have to — if you emphasize, perhaps, education, and some of the other benefits.

I was educated in part because I had a GI Bill. I served my three years and got my way paid through school. That's how I made it.

So I totally identify with that avenue of being able to progress.

Lt. Commander Castaneda: The programs are out there. The recruiting efforts are out there. The biggest problem we face is the parents are not willing to let them put their signature on the line. That's the biggest problem.

Dr. Del Pinal: My parents weren't either.

Mr. Romero: Just one thing, Mr. Pinal. In terms of the under count. It does affect Chapter 1 funding. And Chapter 1 funding goes to Hispanic children all over this country. And if there is an under count, we have problems in the states getting that money to where it belongs, because there is the under count. So it also

causes a financial burden in terms of not being able to serve as many children as we would like to serve. Thank you.

Dr. Del Pinal: I totally identify with what you're saying, but look at it this way. There is a piece of pie that's going to be distributed for purposes of Chapter 1. And what you're saying is there is an under count in certain areas.

So what you're going to do is boost the count in one area. It's going to come from some other area that's going to lose money as well.

So I think if it's just on pure numerical grounds, then you should rethink the formula. It should really be based on the characteristics that you find with the information, so that the money is going to the people who are most needy, not the people who produce the largest counts.

Dr. Saenz: I have another comment to a couple of your observations. And it has to do again back to your comment earlier regarding the problems, as opposed to the solutions.

I think a colleague of mine, at a conference that I was attending last week, made the suggestion that what we, as academicians, do is we create these models that tell us how people get into poverty, but we do not take the — go to the next step and come up with answers to how people get out of poverty.

But I think probably this has to do with the fact that academicians, for the most part — there are some exceptions — but there is little interaction with people who are out there doing the grassroots types of activities.

So that people who may be in the front lines, working with the poor, working with the high school dropouts, and so forth, may be doing some things that are very beneficial, but yet because they don't have the large exposure, those type of programs don't get exposed to other people who may use those type of strategies.

And I think that we need to create more avenues, where we bring in grassroots types of people. We bring in academicians studying poverty, and so forth, politicians, and so forth, to create an interaction and agenda, knowing what other people are doing, so that things that are being done in a positive way can be publicized on a greater fashion.

Your comment about the border area — being from Texas and growing up in a valley of Texas, I'm very much aware of the need for research, as well as moneys, to stimulate economic development in those areas.

It is unfortunate that academicians, as well as even the Latino based organizations, tend to be very much of an urban biased type of — environments where it is urban poverty that gets the attention.

It is also the urban areas that get the attention of the large Hispanic type of organizations. And it is unfortunate that it is the rural Hispanics that tend to have the highest levels of poverty.

For example, according to the '90 census, 27 percent, I believe, of families that were living in the most rural counties were in poverty, compared to about 21 percent for those living in the more urban areas.

And the rural Hispanics also have very unique problems that other programs that are designed for urban poverty are very much different. Unique problems, such as the lack of employment opportunities, the lack of transportation. If there are jobs in the next area and you don't have the buses and so forth to take you there. The lack of health care, lack of hospitals, as well as the environmental problems.

In the valley, we have the colonias that are places that are unincorporated, that have inadequate water resources, and so forth, and there is little attention that is placed on those areas.

To be crude, probably one of the reasons for that has to do that these are isolated type of populations that do not have the numerical type of numbers and they get neglected.

Dr. Santiago: I would like to respond about solutions as well.

Yes, there has been solutions that have been touted by poverty policy makers. For women, get married, essentially. But, obviously, that's not going to solve the problem.

One of the things that we confront with some of the new programs that provide adequate child care, education, and training benefits is that very few Latina women are included in those programs.

And even in states where Latinos represent a very large fraction of the total population, they are a very small proportion of the trainees. And that needs to be addressed.

I also wanted to make a comment. I was a service provider before I went back to get my doctorate. And one of the things that is another problem that we face, when you are providing services, is that it's expected, almost, that Latino community based organizations do their work for free.

And even when they are called upon by government agencies at various levels, there is no third-party transfers, in terms of benefits, to these community based organizations. It is almost assumed, well, you provide the transportation, you provide the translation, you do everything, and you don't provide the money to do that.

Mr. Vios: My name is Oscar Vios (sp. ph.), Mayor of the City of Watsonville, California. I am the first mayor in 150 years in that city. I'm also a — immigrant.

I am also the first, under the district elections, the — I'm the first one elected, which has set up the precedence for others now to run.

We cannot afford to see headlines like "Poverty rate for Hispanics put at twenty-nine percent."

My question is to all of you, and also to the whole panel here, and I hope that we can discuss it this week, is the whole issue that's going on in blaming immigrants and the phobia that is being developed, and the stands that we must take.

It is an ugly feature. With all the numbers, and all the percentages that we have heard this morning, and all the prospects for the future, or for the next century of us being the majority, that also is saying something to the phobia, and to the races who are trying to blame now the economy and the problems that is going on in California by our Governor Wilson, starting from him, and from other political heads of our state, which have

began to blame the immigrants. And I think it is a very — we are walking a very dangerous situation right now.

I think the member from — I mean from Arizona spoke about us being under attack, and we are, in a sense, in a war, in a way, in a war of poverty.

So I ask you, in this day and age, in America, to be bringing back phobias and to be blaming the most poor, and to be blaming the one that has contributed the most, what should we do?

Congressman Serrano: Let me, if I may. As I'm listening to you and as I'm trying very much, all of these three days, to try to keep us on track with our agenda, and our subject, I'm saying how does your question, Mr. Mayor, fit into the cultural diversity subject of today?

...we need to create more avenues, where we bring in grassroots types of people. We bring in academicians studying poverty,...politicians...to create an interaction and agenda...

And if we do that, then I have to, in front of cameras, speak about an ugly truth, that not all of the attacks on immigrants are coming from outside our community.

Some of the attacks on immigrants are coming out of fears from those who have been here a little longer than others. Or from some who feel that the politics of the ones coming in may be totally, or somewhat, different from the politics of the ones that are here. And that's something we have to deal with.

As far as the subject in general, it is one that the Hispanic Caucus has been dealing with now for awhile. It is one where we just got ourselves printed up in just about every newspaper in the nation, with a column which we wrote on behalf of the caucus, saying, "Stop blaming immigrants," and which spells out everything that you know.

And it has reached such a sickening proportion that there is something called the Baker Amendment, which is an amendment that is being now placed on just about every single bill that comes before the House that spends any money, which says that if you directly or indirectly, knowingly or unknowingly, service an undocumented person, that you cannot get those funds.

Example. That amendment was — there was an attempt to place it on the flood moneys. So in my sarcastic direct way I asked, "Does that mean that if somebody is up to water — in water up to their neck, you must first ask for their green card before you bail them out?"

But it goes deeper. On the National Service Plan, they've tried to put it on the amendment, and I see members of the clergy here —we analyzed the following, that if a church — let's take one of the Catholic churches in the Southwest —amongst its 15 different programs has one that may, unknowingly, service an undocumented person, then that church, that parish, would not be eligible to get moneys for other programs within the church that may not service an undocumented.

It would mean that a person in the service program would have to first ask a child for a green card before giving him a vaccine under the new program. There is really no answer, other than to keep up the fight to try to stop it, because the answer to the problem, or the cause of the problem, is that every time in the history of this country that the economy doesn't go well, you blame immigrants.

Secondly, it's a racial thing. And we have to say it. When immigrants were all blond and blue eyes, it was — it was people suffering coming to this country.

When immigrants looked like a lot of us in this room, it is a problem for the country.

But the ugly truth is, that there are people within our community that think it is a problem also. People who begin to play one against the other. And we have to be careful about that.

So, you know, what can be done, Mr. Mayor? Just to keep the fight. To keep trying to talk to people. And to begin — here we go back — to apply pressure within those districts, be they state district on state issues, municipal districts on municipal issues, or congressional districts, where the representative is not Latino, but represents a large number of Latinos, either Latinos that are ready to vote now, or Latinos that will be voting in a few years. Because part of what I do with the census figures is I remind people — people unreported — but, you know, the largest number of those people are not citizens, therefore, they can't vote.

I say, "Yeah, but your biggest complaint is that they are having children," and the children are being born here. And in 18 years, they are going to vote. And politicians do think 18 years ahead.

I know that that comes as a shock to many of you, but we do. Well, that we think may be a total shock to you.

But we do think 18 years ahead. And what are we talking about?

I mean, think back. It was yesterday that Reagan went into office. That was 12 years ago. The kid who was born on the day Reagan got elected, is five years away from voting.

So these figures really do play. But again, the answer is that there is no answer. This is the ugliest — and I predict — I predict that the number one congressional issue in '94 will be immigration, unless our president, through his personality and perseverance, and talent with the First Lady, make it health, or make it some real issue.

But I suspect that immigrant bashing will be the issue of '94, and immigrant bashing is going to be the issue of '96.

That's why I think, just making a — yes, a political statement, but I'll make it — he was very courageous to go to New York and say that Dave Dinkins' number one problem was the fact that people were afraid to vote for someone different than them. And he dared touch that subject that usually doesn't get touched.

In '94 and '96, number one issue is going to be "those people." Our biggest challenge will be to slap in the mouth people in our community who say "those

people" when they're talking about their own cousin.

Mr. Falcon: I think to add to that, I think that it's a serious problem internally within the Latino community because we find, as we have strong advocates, that are for more open immigration, that are very progressive on this issue, but we found in survey after survey, in terms of the Latino community, that it is not just second, third generation Latinos who are reacting to immigrants but, for example, the survey I mentioned of the Latino National — Survey, we found the same kind of anti-immigrant feelings among U.S. born and non-citizens as well.

So even people who were here recently also are kind of saying, "Well, let me close the door behind me real quick." So it's a deeper kind of problem.

In New York City there was a survey that was done by a group called Hispanic Federation. They asked the question about whether, "Has immigration been good or bad for the city?" Very, very high percentages of all Latinos said that it was bad for the city.

So this is a more serious problem and one that really calls for, I think, our leadership to understand that there may be a little bit of a gap here between what our leadership may be advocating, and what's happening in our communities. And that we need to find strategies to do community education and to start moving this issue.

Then, ironically, we have people on the conservative side, like a Linda Chavez, or a Peter Scurry (sp. ph.), who, for example, at the same time may be taking these — you know, feeling these same kind of anti-immigrant feelings, but also are saying that we have to decide whether, as Latinos, we're a racial minority, like the blacks are, or immigrants. And that we should really think of ourselves as immigrants.

Some of the attacks on immigrants are coming out of fears from those who have been here a little longer than others.

So you have like a lot of contradictory kinds of things out there, in terms of these projections of what, you know, it is to be an immigrant. It's a bad thing because it is also taking jobs, but we should have an immigrant mentality because that's good. We shouldn't have a mentality as a racial minority, like the blacks, because, you know, then we'll never progress.

So there's a lot of contradictory images and I think it is a tremendous challenge for us to take that whole discourse and turn it on its head and really take control of it. And I think that's going to be one of our big challenges for many of us in the next few years, because I agree. I think immigration is going to be a — you know, the key issue in the next couple of years.

Mr. Brown: Gues what? We are running late. We know we have five more — four or five. So please be brief and we ask the panel members to be brief with their answers, so we have time for final summations. Thank you.

Mr. deJesus: My name is Edgar de Jesus (sp. ph.) I'm a representative of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Worker's Union, from the New York and New Jersey area. I work with the Civil Rights Department.

As a legislator from New Mexico, I've gone through having been a Spanish-American, and a Chicano, a Mexican-American, and now...back to Spanish-American again...

Before my challenge, let me just describe other positions.

I'm the first vice-president of the National Congress for Puerto Rican Rights.

I'm part of the Board of Directors of the Institute for Puerto Rican Policy, to make sure that Angelo represents us properly and ethically.

And I'm with the Hispanic Labor Committee, New York City.

I live in — I'm from Newburg, New York. I'm not from New York City. I was from a barrio, and then from the Bronx, and I'm in Newburg. That's 80 miles north.

A challenge. The challenge is to our Congressman Serrano, but it is to whoever can respond to it. And I'm going to raise this challenge on the basis of the past two years' experience.

The challenge is this. How can we insure that folks like presenters today, that know the demographics, that understand the cultural diversity of our — all the different Latinos throughout the United States and in the Caribbean — Puerto Rico, right —Santo Domingo — how can we insure that we start working more with each other than continuing to work independently and producing political policies that often end up contradicting each other amongst the Latino population?

Let me explain what is it I'm saying. In the past two years, the Puerto Ricans — and I'm speaking in general now. Not just the Puerto Rican Congress —was like Johnny-come-lately, or a Juan tavar es lado (sp. ph.), right — on the topic of the impact of economic integration in the Americas, and how it is going to impact Latinos in America. Because when it was first presented, Puerto Rico was even excluded; right.

There was formed, through the initiative of the Chicano movement of the Mexican-American folks, Southwest Border Research Project — La Raza, MALDEF — through their initiative was formed a national Latino process to discuss the impact of the North American Free Trade Agreement on Latinos in the United States.

The process that started, some of the things that occurred, was that the — the having of materials, resources, and all that was more and overly abundant in the Southwest, and very scant in the Northeast, nonexistent in Puerto Rico, and the Caribbean, and much complete ignoring of Chicago, Detroit, the Midwest, even the City of Buffalo.

Or let me put it different way. There is more — there is many more Latinos on different structures in America that goes beyond the Southwest; right.

So the challenge is the following. How can we insure that our folks who do these demographic analyses, we work closer together so that we don't —we could come out with policies that are not just regionally located.

In New York City there was a survey that was done by a group called Hispanic Federation. They asked the question... "Has immigration been good or bad for the city?" Very, very high percentages of all Latinos said that it was bad for the city.

And I say this from the standpoint that there is a need. The hope is, the way we address cultural diversity nationally is when we have Dominicans participating in this process; when we have Cuban-Americans participating in this process; when we have Puerto Ricans contributing in this process; we need to bring that. And I'm not sure how that process could insure on a national basis. Gracias.

Congressman Serrano: Well, very briefly. I think that the question really centers around the NAFTA discussion more than anything else.

Part of the problem that the caucus is always dealing with is, again, trying to bring the caucus from an institution that had social activities, to an institution that has very serious political and legislative agenda.

That hasn't been easy to do in the last year and a half, and certainly in the first nine months of this year.

There are some people who are still very nervous everywhere about our new development, and our new involvement.

NAFTA, as one, happens to be one of the two issues that divide — three issues — that divide Latinos so much that some of us have tried very much to either decide to leave it aside for now, or decide to deal with it in a very different way.

NAFTA divides the Hispanic Caucus strongly. The issue of the political future of Puerto Rico divides the Hispanic Caucus strongly.

And the issue of lifting or not lifting the embargo on Cuba divides the Hispanic Caucus strongly.

Those three issues, I think, we've sort of agreed, without agreeing, that for the sake of the unity of the caucus, we deal with them as individual issues.

In other words, every legislator has their right to go. But if I brought before the caucus right now the NAFTA issue, we would have a seven hour war, to be followed only by a 15 hour war on whether Puerto Rico should be a state or independent, and a 59 hour on the Cuban embargo.

And so perhaps part of my leadership is to know when not to lead on an issue.

And NAFTA is one of those and so the information was not floating, because the information — at first, NAFTA was seen as a Mexican-American issue in the Southwest.

Then we were — was good enough to tell the Northeast, it's your problem, too. Either way — now the press, in some ways, caught up to the written media because, in this case, the TV was always ahead, and now we are beginning to read columns that say, "There is an issue before us."

Coupled by — and there is another point here that you have to bring up every so often, that NAFTA was conceived during a Republican administration where the chances of Latino trade unionist people being involved and bringing back the information was not as good as it is now.

So you have all these things coming into play.

Mr. Pena: Good morning. My name is Ignacio Pena. I'm an elected official from California, supporting, I guess, a movement, a foundation that was started in Texas.

And today, you know, in discussing Latino/Hispanic issues, I don't think that anyone can contradict the fact that one of the most common interests among Hispanics is the high regards of the family unity, it being the base to any community, whether it would be Hispanic, Anglo — I mean, any —you know, that's the basis of any community.

This brings me to share the following concern, as we move forward in integrating the Latino/Hispanic population, where we are seeing more single women households, leading to poverty, and eventually negative future outcomes of our Latino/Hispanic children.

Now, through this process, I was a recipient of this foundation called The Hispanic-American Family of the Year, in which I would like to read a paragraph that I received through a letter from them, in asking you for your support, as far as maintaining something as such a noble cause.

It says — it was directed to my family and it says, "After Henry Cisneros and six congressmen petitioned Hillary Rodham Clinton to accept our invitation to become our honorary national chair, we received an answer from her office. She is not interested in our program.

"Without the support of the White House we are unable to get national sponsors. Without national sponsors, it is impossible to do the Hispanic Family of the Year awards.

"This is why you have not heard from us in sometime. We have no choice but to close the foundation for now."

So in this case, if we're talking about Hispanic issues, I would like to now raise this concern to the Hispanic Caucus as one of our main ones.

Congressman Serrano: We can deal with that because I'm good at these things, but I can't get that one under cultural diversity for this workshop. But I do promise you that the caucus will look into it and see in any way that we can be helpful.

Mr. Pena: Thank you.

Congressman Serrano: By the way, let me — I neglected before to mention the fact that these things cost money, and we have friends who are helping us. We have Anheuser-Busch Companies helping us very well. We have AT&T. So make sure you drink some beer and make sure you make phone calls.

We have Ford Motor Company and since I drive an Escort, I feel good about that.

And we have Telemundo, who were very quick to

point to me that they have made an effort, a serious effort, to bring about local news more than international news.

And my comments on the media were in general, and are indeed in general. And a lot are directed at people who write and not who do TV. But I'll give you a quick example of what some of our complaints are.

In New York, there is always the point that Angelo Diaz was about. The Latino vote. How is the Latino vote going to go.

And you go to certain parts and they ask a lady from Colombia, "How are you going to vote?" She says, "Well, I'm against Dinkins," or "I'm for Dinkins." And then somebody says, "Is she a citizen?" They say, "No. She's not going to vote in the next election," and nobody wants to deal with the fact that 84 percent of the Latino vote is Puerto Rican; right.

Then the other one. If you watch TV, and this is a touchy one, but I'll touch it anyway — if you watch Spanish TV and read Spanish papers, you'll swear that 99.9 percent of all Hispanics favor the embargo on Cuba. Well, that's a form of a controlled news sometimes.

How can we insure that our folks who do these demographic analyses, we work closer together so that we don't ... come out with policies that are not just regionally located?

So part of what we have to do is begin to deal with some incredible issues within our own community as to who we hire, and who we put in front of the cameras, and how we report, and what news we deal with, and what local colloquial language we use that deals with a local issue, and so on.

But all that to say that we are running out of time. Mr. Brown is trying to get us out of here and we don't want to keep Secretary Cisneros waiting at lunch.

Mr. Acosta: Good morning. My name is Edwin Acosta. I'm with the U.S. Student Association here in Washington.

I bring an issue, I think, that could bring together all Latinos. I'm happy to be Mexican and Puerto Rican, so I face both problems, in a lot of issues.

I was brought up in Brooklyn, living in a Jewish community, an Italian community, and a West Indian community. I can tell you that one issue that does bring people together, and people agree with, is education. That is the key to a lot of the problems that were on the screen.

Voting, if you're educated, most likely you will vote.

Income, as far as family — women who have an education and can work, can bring up their children if they have a job that pays them very well. And education is very related to that.

Now, it seems to me that when there is a question of putting Latinos in jail, there is a lot of money for that. When it gets money for putting Latinos in the military — the Lt. Commander just said earlier that they are waiting for 60,000 people to hire. But when it comes to putting Latinos in education, there is a big problem. There is always a lot of money that's missing there. It needs to be filled in.

All you have to do is look at the regional statewide debates on funding of higher education. You try to take money away from white upper middle class communities and put that into Latino communities, or poor white communities, and there is big fights.

So education is understood to be one of the major and most important issues for Latinos.

So I'm wondering, is the caucus going to take that up and should it lead the fight, because it seems to me that education is going to be the key for Latinos to make it in the future. And since we are growing at a large number, a lot of them are poor, and there is going to be more money that's going to be needed. So I'm wondering —

Congressman Serrano: Very briefly. The caucus this year, we instituted a couple of different things, not just this conference here, through the Institute, but we broke the caucus down into subcommittees for the first time. Task forces.

And one of them, headed by Mr. Beserra, from California, is education and employment. And we are just about a few days away from introducing our version of the Education Bill.

We're introducing our version of an Immigration Bill.

We're introducing our version of a Health Care Bill.

And we will at least put on every agenda our version. And our version is based on the comments that we — and trust me, you guys do — you know, you grew up in a Jewish community, so you know what a "nudge" is. These people stay on our case day and night and so we're doing that. And we know — we know. You don't have to worry about that, that without education, everything else is just a big discussion.

Mr. Brown: Unfortunately, we've run out of time, so we're going to wrap it up. I can't resist saying something, though. Mr. Paldo mentioned "brown." Well, that happens to be my last name. A very British last name, except it comes — I was born in Cuba. Except the last name, Brown, comes from Guanega (sp. ph.) where my father was born, Puerto Rico, and my grandfather was born in Ponce, and my grandmother in Yelco (sp. ph.), so you talk about diversity.

Thank you, very much.

Session #1
Culturally-Inclusive Curriculum

Moderator:

Charles Ericksen
Hispanic Link

Presenters:

Nancy "Rusty" Barcelo, Ph. D.
Assistant Dean, Office of the Provost
University of Iowa

Carl A Grant
Professor, Department of Curriculum and Instruction and the Department of Afro-American Studies
University of Wisconsin

Sonia Nieto
Associate Professor of the Cultural Diversity and Curriculum Reform Program, School of Education
University of Massachusetts

Luis O. Reyes, Ph.D.
New York City Board of Education

Jane Bello
Executive Director
Association of Hispanic Arts

Thursday, September 30 PROCEEDINGS

1:30 pm - 4:00 pm Rayburn House Office Building

Mr. Ericksen: I think an issue that we have come here to share our knowledge and wisdom on today is one that is of particular, preferably, primary concern to Hispanics, and I think — that without an education base, we are not going to move very far, or very fast in this society. Surveys that we have looked at over the years have shown that education is the primary interest, primary concern, primary worry for communities.

So what I will do is introduce the panelists quickly and then we will ask them to speak briefly and we hope that we will get very interactive as this goes on. There will be a couple of very basic questions we'd like them to address, and then we want to make sure that all of you — on some things you need to know, or want to know. By all means either stand up and identify yourself and ask your question or — is it necessary for them to go to the microphone? It's a pretty small room.

The Audience: Yes. So everyone can hear, that's fine. It might be helpful for the transcriber.

Mr. Ericksen: Yes. For the transcriber, it would be better if you do go —

The Audience: Yes. Do go to the microphone.

Mr. Ericksen: — to the microphone, so that we have you on record, whatever your point is.

Let me first of all start by introducing —I'll just move from the far right to my immediate right here. Let's see. That's Jane Bello, who is Executive Director of the Association of Hispanic Arts, which is a national arts service organization, dedicated to the advancement of the Latino arts groups.

Next to her is Sonia Nieto, who is an Associate Professor and the Program Director of the Cultural and Curriculum Reform Program in the School of Education, University of Massachusetts.

In the middle is Carl Grant, who is a professor at the Department of the Curriculum and Instruction, down at the Department of Afro-American Studies, at the University of Wisconsin, at Madison.

And then comes Nancy Rusty Barcelo, who is the Assistant Dean of the Office of Provost, University of Iowa, where she developed and coordinated many academic support programs.

And finally, an individual who is making a lot of history and change in New York City, Luis Reyes, who sits on the New York Board of Education, and among his many other requirements, acts as Board of Education Liaison for Multi-Cultural Education and Bilingual Education.

One thing we would like all of the panelists is to just give us kind of an overview — we have some nice perspectives here, so that I hope we won't all be saying — agreeing with one another here.

And as we move along — we will have a couple of political perspectives. A couple of the congressmen will be coming in and we may sort of interrupt and give them a shot at us to describe what they perceive as the political impediments, and the political hopes for multi-cultural education.

But I will ask all of the panelists to think about it a little bit and then we'll talk about it. The general question is given the current generally low academic achievements of Latinos and other students of color, how can a culturally-inclusive curriculum positively affect these children's academic performance in the schools?

So when we are talking about a culturally-responsive and a culturally-inclusive curriculum, we want to make certain that it is inclusive in an ongoing manner.

I'd like each of you to speak for a few minutes. And Dr. Grant, if you don't mind, I'm going to ask you to kick this off to give us — to kind of define the issue for us, if you would, and to — if you want to talk a little bit more about what you do.

Dr. Grant: I guess the — since you have asked me to start, I guess I would like to start out by reshaping the question somewhat.

I would start out by saying, given the fact that we do have students of color who are not achieving as rapidly as we would like them to achieve, how can it affect?

I think it is affecting, but I would say that effect perhaps has not been captured by the standard tests that we are now using.

But when one visits schools and talk to students of color, and even white students, and ask them about, what is the curriculum of infusion doing, they can tell you. When you read ethno-graphic studies, one finds out that this curriculum is assisting.

One of the drawbacks is that those of us who are in multicultural education have not been privileged with the research money to go in to investigate and to describe those outcomes to be able to generalize them to the wide population.

So one of the things that we are suffering from is the barriers that prevents this information from getting out.

Now, as I say that, that does not mean that more does not need to be done, or that we do not need to work harder in that area.

That also does not mean that we do not need to work harder to make certain that the — that what we are calling a curriculum of infusion is really infused.

In other words, by that I mean, that it picks up on, it reflects, and it is responsive to the diversity of students that are in the many classrooms, and the different students, as we were listening just at lunch, that are in our schools across the country.

So when we think of infusion, we often think that the curriculum is speaking to all of the kids who are there. Often this is not the case. Sometimes it is only speaking to some, and sometimes only partially. Maybe once a month; maybe once every two months; or maybe once every three months. Let me say, on occasion.

So when we are talking about a culturally-responsive and a culturally-inclusive curriculum, we want to make certain that it is inclusive in an ongoing manner.

So I would change that to say — to read that in a much more positive manner, but also to situate how do we begin to work from there, because we know we are only beginning to make beginning steps in that area.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you, very much. Dr. Nieto, would you like to pick up from there?

Dr. Nieto: Well, Carl and I did the same thing. We both shaped the question so that we could answer what we want to answer. So I'm going to do the same thing, for a different reason, although I think his reason is very good.

I think it's important that — there seems to be the assumption in this question that a culturally-inclusive curriculum will be the way to positively affect the academic achievements of the students.

And although I'm in the field of multi-cultural education, and I am a real proponent of this, I would caution us that we need to not seek the answer or a simplistic answer to what are a very complex set of issues and situations, that speaking Spanish and eating — is not enough.

And that what we can do is, in fact, speak Spanish, or have a curriculum that is more sensitive to our experiences and yet the kids can —

So I think that we have to understand that —first of all, we have to look at what we mean by multi-cultural education. And if that's what we mean, then we have to reframe it.

The way that I would ask the question is a bit different. I would ask, what is causing Latinos in other schools to have such low academic achievement. And those are the kinds of factors that I would like us to look at.

And I would suggest that we — that we understand that designing a culturally-inclusive curriculum may be one step toward solving that problem, but we have to be very clear about what the causes of the failure are.

...we have to look at the policies and practices in schools that allow some students to progress, and close the door on other students.

And the causes are not only an ethnocentric curriculum, although certainly that has more than a little bit to do with it, but I think that we have to look at the policies and practices in schools that allow some students to progress, and close the door on other students.

And I'll say more about some of those policies and practices as we go along. But as far as policies and practices, we also need to look at structures such as expectations, for example. What are the expectations of Latino students, compared to expectations of other students.

Or how are some students disadvantaged because of their culture and language, not because their culture and language are inferior, or that there is anything wrong with them, but rather that the schools — the school system may not know how to take advantage of that culture and language and can only see them within the —

So those are the kinds of issues that I think we need to address, rather than only looking at a culturally-inclusive curriculum.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you, very much. I appreciate the — so we can get more active participation as we move along.

How about Rusty Barcelo. Are you prepared to follow along on the same theme?

Ms. Barcelo: Actually, I agree with my colleagues here.

As someone from the Midwest, the Heartland, I'm still riveting from this morning's presentation of — and as I sat there, it became even more clear to me that really what we're talking about, in terms of education, we're talking about some structural and ideological changes that need to take place.

In fact, I personally am concerned about the use of the term "integration," which I believe places us still on the margin.

But maybe what we need to talk about is more how to transform the institutions — I believe that Sonia has taken — as well.

But I think more importantly, there was an assumption this morning that maybe — and that's the whole question of data. And someone in the audience raised the question, "What are the solutions?"

Well, I think there is an assumption that —individuals know that we exist. I can at least say that in the

Midwest, and I would argue in some parts of the other country, where Latinos are heavily concentrated, there is still a great mystery about who we are. And I find that to be one of my most critical tasks in terms of presenting the educational needs of Latinos. The basic question that they ask me is, "Well, who in the heck are you?"

And for me that becomes a very critical issue, when we start talking about issues of the curriculum, how that can become a part of the curriculum. But that's only one part of the question.

So I think the question is even more basic in terms of, yes, we know the data in this particular room, but I'm not convinced other people know what our issues are and our concerns are, and we need to be moving in that direction.

But when I do think about how does a culturally-inclusive curriculum affect students, of course the first word that comes to my mind is the whole issue of empowerment and we can talk some more about that in the next few minutes.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you. We'll move to the far end, to Jane Bello.

Ms. Bello: It's interesting because I'm the only panelist here today who is an educator, who is a scholar, who — material on education.

And my perspective is a little bit broader. And it is really rooted in the difference of our culture bias, and I think that, obviously, school performance is a very small piece of the entire picture.

The picture poses a tremendous danger for us. And I give an example of this because recently, when President Clinton was — in his inaugural speech, he stated that each generation of Americans needs to define what it means to be an American.

And there is a danger posed in this, and that is that, obviously, each generation's definition will be governed by where it stands in the American triangle, and what they have been taught about where others stand in the American triangle.

Culture includes the institutions, the relationships, the belief systems, values, customs, arts, wants, languages, not just racial or ethnic heritage.

And obviously that definition, if it were done today, would be void of some principles that we very strongly believe in. And — for instance, that the basis of our liberty and justice are bounded on principles of slavery and genocide.

And that, to me, I think is the root of the issue, is that the impact — or the void, or the absence of a curriculum that is truly inclusive has an impact that is much broader.

And on a more basic level, I think that —obviously, that a cultural curriculum — a culturally-inclusive curriculum — sets — creates bridges across cultures and instills pride and a sense of security amongst other cultures.

But there is one very essential way —incredibly important aspect of education which has shamefully been neglected — that I want to most share with you today. And that is that there are extremely

— that the arts have in creating those bridges. And how essential — how they are equally as essential as the three Rs, and how they teach us who we are, and the importance of the arts.

What is taught in the classroom, that is multi-cultural in content, has to multi-cultural in the process. And that process has to be inclusive.

And I guess one of the saddest points about it is that we, ourselves, often forget that, and forget the critical role that the arts have. And when we, ourselves, as a community, forget that, it is very easy to understand why others forget it as well.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you, very much. We saved the political aspect till the last, I think, as probably — it is the most difficult — that the right wing groups at work today all over the country that are just terrified of the multi-cultural curriculum, and they are doing some things about it in California to New York.

So let's hear from Luis Reyes.

Mr. Reyes: Thank you. I think there may be somebody else on the panel you were expecting, but I'm an educator, not a politician.

As a member of the board, I have to deal with the politics of education, and the policies, and they are related.

But let me say that along with my other colleagues, I'd like to redirect the question of culturally-inclusive curriculum. We talked about education that is multi-cultural, and did not talk about multi-cultural education, but education that is multi-cultural, and defining it as an education that reflects and supports the diverse nature of the world community, the U.S. community, the Latino community, and preserves and respects the individuality of each student in his or her culture.

Understanding that culture — if we are going to look at it just in an ethnic sense, will limit our understanding of what is the issue, or one of the issues.

Culture includes the institutions, the relationships, the belief systems, values, customs, arts, wants, languages, not just racial or ethnic heritage.

This diverse culture background, which each of us brings to the classroom, whether as a student, or as a teacher, or as a parent, affects the attitudes and behaviors that we have towards people who are different, individually, or as part of a group, because of their race, their language, their ethnic background, the religion that they practice or believe in.

It also determines how values concerning sex roles, something which is very important to look at in the Latino context, male and female relationships, sexual orientation, ability, how do we deal with people who are different because of their physical conditions, as well as their age.

The suggestion that I would make, as others have made, is that the issue of a culturally-inclusive curriculum has to be seen in the larger context, of what is our vision or visions of an education that's multi-cultural,

understanding that it connects with the issue of cultural identity, as I have tried to define it in a very broad, inclusive way, that has lots of diversity to deal with, but also acknowledging the differences and the areas of similarity.

But we can't talk about an education that's multi-cultural, that assumes that all children, all adults involved in education, are equal as human beings, in terms of their union rights, their civil rights, and responsibilities, if we don't deal with the staffing of schools and the lack of affirmative action. You can't preach multi-cultural education if you don't practice it. If you don't practice it in the policies of the school system, in the distribution of resources. So that we have people in our community fighting around the whole area of equity of resources, finances, in the public schools.

What is taught in the classroom, that is multi-cultural in content, has to be multi-cultural in the process. And that process has to be inclusive. It means that parents have to be part of the decision about what goes on in schools. It means that schools can't be run by professionals alone, and that's a change in the power relationship. Education has not been cultural and the curriculum that's culturally inclusive deals with power relations. People who are different because of their race, their color, their gender, their religion, who for one reason or another dominate other people, dominate the resources, dominate the discourse, and other people, who because of their differences, do not gain equal respect, access.

And so a child who doesn't have an equal access to a core curriculum, in math, and reading, and science, and social studies, that's equal to what other students are getting, if he's taught about Puerto Rican history, or Chicano history, that means nothing if he is not learning about history in a way that deals with the power — power issues historically, as well as the present state.

That means that what happens in the life of the student and his family, her family, the unity becomes part of an education. If that's left out of the classroom, then that education isn't multi-cultural.

So if you have young people in schools that are overcrowded without equal access to computers, and technology, living in a neighborhood that has homeless shelters, and incinerators put into it because it is a poor community that lacks power, and you don't deal with that in the educational process, then that's not an education that's multi-cultural. That is more the flavor-of-the-month education.

Mr. Ericksen: Before we get to those experts in the audience that have a question or a comment, do any of the panelists have any reaction to what any of the other panelists might have said?

Are there other questions from the audience at this point? Yes, sir.

It would be good if you would identify yourself, too.

Mr. Crespo: My name is Santos Crespo. This is something that is hitting home to me personally, one that — I can't remember the name. But his question was, "Who are we," which is a question that I've been asking myself for a very, very long time.

I'm first generation. My parents came from Puerto Rico back in the migration from the islands.

And I have a difficulty adjusting, to trying to identify myself to a culture. And although my parents, the predominant language was Spanish, I found myself in a situation and environment that was hostile to my language, and making those kinds of adjustments.

And seeing that I was Puerto Rican when it suited somebody, but then I was American when it suited somebody else, and then I was back to being Puerto Rican, and the other stuff we have commented on.

In trying to answer myself that question, I found myself doing a lot of research — going back to the old roots. And I found a very important element to me, I was missing throughout my upbringing, and that was my — my connection to an indigenous culture that was present when Columbus arrived on the island. And I'm speaking about a culture called the Taino culture. And that's been my missing link.

And I find that in learning about history, whether it be American history, or history from the island, a great deal of that is totally eliminated.

The student literally broke down in my class...because he had bought into this system, that if he did everything [right], he would not be treated as a minority.

And when I started to make those connections, things seemed — started to open up to me.

The arts was another element that I also found where I can connect that culture and sort of put it out artistically. And I now find my son, who is 17, who I almost lost to the streets because he had stopped going to school, and that was the medium that I sort of got him back — or actually, he got himself back into school — was through finding out that missing link of culture, and the arts.

And I don't find that happening in terms of a lot of the curriculums.

In New York City there is a curriculum for Native Americans, and if anybody is going to be a Native American, it would be, you know, the people from — from the Dominican Republic, from Cuba, from all the islands in the Caribbean, who were there when Columbus arrived. And yet there is nothing mentioned in that curriculum, and yet that particular program is housed in an area that is predominantly Latino, or Hispanic, or whatever you want to call it. And —

Mr. Ericksen: Okay. Let me —

Mr. Crespo: I'm looking for an answer as to how would you integrate that.

Mr. Ericksen: Do we have a volunteer with an answer. Dr. Barcelo.

Dr. Barcelo: I think one of the things that we need to remember is that educational institutions are still about this — and perpetuation of the Eurocentric type of experience. I think really that's what multi-cultural education is all about, to give a broader view.

And, you know, in fact, I work with scholars —

learned scholars in our university, and they have ACT scores of 28, and SAT scores of 1,400, and they —you know, they have been told all their lives that if they do — if they score high, they do well in school, they are not going to be treated any differently.

But, in fact, one of the things that we're finding, these are the very students that are having a lot of difficulty on our campuses. They are not performing up to speed, even though they have the so-called credentials.

By the time they come into my office, and we start talking about what's going on — I say, "What's going on, Maria? What's going on" — whatever. And inevitably, it comes down to the whole issue of cultural identity.

I can recall one student particularly — if I can just share an anecdote with you, was concerned that his grades weren't quite what they were, and finally I said, "Are you trying to tell me that you are experiencing discrimination in the classroom?"

The student literally broke down in my class — could not even say the word because he had bought into this system, that if he did everything, he would not be "treated" as a minority. And I think the effect had been devastating.

So I think when all of us stand up here —sit up here and talk about the changes in the total structure, I think that's what we are really talking about. It has to be at that complete level in terms of policies, in terms of coming to students, and all the total experience, so that we can capture, you know, the kinds of histories and art that you're talking about, and I think that empowers the people.

This is ...building strength for young people, who in U.S. schools for many, many years, have been stripped of that identity...

Ms. Nieto: I'd like to also respond to that, talking about some of the processes — a lot of us, as children, were subjected to.

And I wish that I could say that it doesn't happen anymore, that it just happened in the early '50s in Brooklyn — where I grew up, where my parents would be sent home notes to speak only in English to us, or where I would be told in school that I was rude for speaking Spanish.

Now, that still happens and that has to be devastating for children who hear that what they most love, and the people who they most love, represents something that's not wanted in the classrooms.

So one of the first things that we have to do is to work closely with teachers and, of course, as Luis says, to make sure that parents get involved, so that those things are no longer acceptable, so that we change the culture of the school. Because we can have a unit on the Taino Indians, but that's not going to make a huge impact. And I'm sure that's not what you meant. But — because those kinds of things have been tried.

I mean, I was — I was telling — the first five minutes of school — the first time in New York —and I remember that we spent a lot of time making little bolillos, and little — villages, and — and it looked very nice, and I enjoyed it, and I learned a lot about my culture that way.

But that alone doesn't do it. That doesn't give the kids the message that what they bring to school is worthwhile, it's worthy, it's important, and we're going to use it in your education.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you. Luis?

Mr. Reyes: I wanted to first state that you have in the New York City public schools a curriculum — materials on Puerto Rican experience that deal with the issues prepared by — Rodriguez, who is now working with the Chicago public schools in developing a much larger curriculum on Puerto Rican experience.

That — those curriculum materials talk about the African — as well as Iberian-European roots of Puerto Rican identity.

However, as Sonia Nieto has said, that that by itself doesn't deal with our identity. Because, as a Puerto Rican, most of our children in our schools in the United States are born in New York, and Chicago, and different cities and towns, and they need to understand that history of Puerto Rico. And that history that talks about diversity into the making of the Puerto Rican identity, and also resistance to oppression on the part of the Tainos, as opposed to somehow our opinion of the Taino Indian as a very tranquil, passive spirit.

That is useful, especially when it is connected to the history of the Puerto Rican experience, the Chicano experience, and other Latino community experiences in the U.S.

That's an education that's multi-cultural, when the young people get to understand the roots of the issue of status of Puerto Rico, a history of 500 years of colony, and seeking autonomy, seeking freedom, and self rule. And then examining the three different options that are being dealt with today. That brings history into current events.

Understanding how Puerto Ricans became part of the migration experience into the United States teaches them about economics, sociology, teaches them to relate to the issues of race.

How is it that Puerto Rican, a dark-skinned in Puerto Rico, who sees herself first as a Puerto Rican, comes to the United States and is treated, because of her skin and her color, and other features, as a black, and then has to deal with the issues of race from a North American experience, different from, in some ways, from the Puerto Rican experience. At the same time, the issues of slavery and bondage are part of the history of Puerto Rico, and the Caribbean, as well as the United States.

That's talking about identity. To understand then what community organization — what is the history of our community, whether it is in east L.A., in Chicago, in Miami, or in New York, in trying to defend our identity, trying to struggle within the context of poverty and segregation, et cetera.

And then understanding that we have ordinary people, as well as extraordinary people, who make history. Whether it is in the garment industry, or whether it is

...it is really hard for our children, whether Hispanic, Latino, whatever they are, to compete in an education system that expects them to fail.

in education or in civil rights. This is part of a building identity and building strength for young people, who in U.S. schools, for many, many years, have been stripped of that identity, been asked to give up their — give up their history, told that their community is less than valued in the human sense because of stereotyping, because of the objective conditions that they and their families are in, that they internalize self hate, and self denial.

And so an education that deals with that identity takes us from roots to deal with present issues and helps young people understand that they are not victims because of the discrimination that they may feel in the classroom, that a teacher, the adults, as well as the other students, help young people to get a sense of the voice and the power that they have based on the richness of their — history.

But also the struggles. That they need —they need an education. They need technical knowledge, and literary understanding and analysis to be able to confront.

Otherwise, they are going to get a basic —back to basics approach, which deals just with reading scores and math scores, and has no connection to the lived experience that they have. And that's what education and identity really is about.

Mr. Ericksen: Okay. Let's have maybe the second —

Ms. Groder: I'm Mary Groder from the — Elementary School District — trustee. And my question would be, how do we have a united effort to talk about curriculum.

And I can give you example that happened in the — school district a few weeks ago at the high school level. The newspapers were given some information — in a math problem, the curriculum that was purchased by the high school district had a question in it that started something like this, it said, "Juan, the drug dealer, had 25 kilos of cocaine" — and you know, on and on.

And one of the things is that — again, I know that it is the persons — had good intentions. When they asked, "Why was this even developed," and it would be, "Well, we're trying to have them relate to what happens in" —

It is outrageous. It does happen.

Dr. Nieto: I bet that wasn't a Latino who wrote that. But that's part of the issue. That is, who is developing the curriculum? Who is developing the policies?

Mr. Ericksen: Go ahead, Jane.

Ms. Bello: I think the issue goes well beyond just policies and curriculum.

The issue that we need to begin to address is a national cultural rights policy, which looks at —and obviously, should — the curriculum — a policy on inclusiveness in the arts.

But I think that this — has to be driven by a much broader philosophy and policy. It has to be a national cultural rights policy that begins to look at the issue of culture as a right.

And in New York City, for example, there is a piece of legislation — and I think legislation is also a critical area — obviously, I am very idealistic, but there is a piece of legislation that has been introduced that basically it is to seek to defend cultural rights, including the linguistic rights, and it is — somewhere.

But I think that it is a very important first step in that those are the kinds of things that we need to be looking at and as possible solutions.

Mr. Ericksen: Go ahead.

Ms. de Jesus: My name is Gloria de Jesus. I work for the — administration, but I would like to speak on this — education.

My daughter — my own children's experience, because I've gone through that lots of times —

Mr. Ericksen: Can you all hear her, or would it be better

Ms. de Jesus: My daughter was raised in a bilingual —

Mr. Ericksen: Yes. The gentleman running the machine would like you to go to the microphone.

Ms. de Jesus: This is an issue that is going around in all the schools, all right, and I would like you to look into it.

My daughter was placed in a bilingual school — class, rather, because of her last name, Vocasio; right.

Now, there was — all the classes were in Spanish, okay. All the exams she got were 90s and 100s. She was an excellent child in class.

Now, when it was one year before her graduation, our school system told me — they told me that she wasn't going to graduate because she didn't have — she was reading on a fifth grade level.

I went to school and I told the — I spoke to the principal, and I said to him, "What year was this reading — the reading level?"

He checked back. It was the first reading exam that she got in her life. So I looked at him and I said, "This is a shame."

I said, "What I would like you to do is to give her more classes, reading classes, and I want her to be tested within six months. You have children in the schools that you're going to fail and they do —they are doing pretty good in the class, and you're going to fail them because the curriculum is — you know, the school itself is not doing the job."

And they tested her within six months and she — she was reading at an 11th grade level.

And this is going on, you know. A lot of bilingual children that are coming from other countries are being left, and this is why we have a lot of dropouts from school because the kids, they feel that they are being jeopardized in the classes.

Mr. Ericksen: Go ahead.

Mr. Rodriguez: My name is Juan Rodriguez. I'm from the Nogales Unified School District in Madison, Arizona.

And one of the things that I've noticed is I know it is really hard for our children, whether Hispanic, Latino,

whatever they are, to compete in an education system that expects them to fail.

I think what we need to do is we need to retrain our teachers that every kid is gifted, and that they can all learn. Some learn slower than others, but they all eventually learn.

And I think when the system expects kids to fail, that they stereotype you because you are a Hispanic, a Mexican, that you're going to be a cotton picker, or a farm worker, that's wrong, because we have very successful people and it is evident with the people we have elected to Congress.

So I think a lot of this change has to come within the system, and I know all the experts will come up here and we can sit here and we can talk until we are blue in the face, but that's where we have to start.

...it is in the mainstream that we see very little in terms of culturally -inclusive curriculum...that emphasizes the importance of language and culture.

And we need to also educate our parents, because a lot of our parents — a lot of the people that are there — in fact, the statistics that were shown this morning is, yes, we have all these great statistics that say, "Yes, 67 percent of the Hispanics live here." Well, let's start putting faces to these statistics, not just numbers, because they are all human beings, and they have needs, and that's where the system has to address them — address the needs of these people.

And that's, I think, where we're failing. And I think one of the reasons I got involved in education is because I didn't see — I didn't like what was going on there. And I think that if the young Hispanic and Latino people get involved, we can make a difference and change it.

And it doesn't matter if you are Puerto Rican, or Mexican, or Cuban, or whatever. I think we can all bridge together, and art work is one way of bringing, you know, the cultures.

There was a program that I used to see on one of the national Mexican TVs, where every now and then, for 30 seconds or a minute, they'd show a really neat thing about culture in Puerto Rico, Cuba, Mexico, and I mean, that was great because it made me understand that type of people a lot better, and it made me feel better as a human being.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you, very much.

Mr. Reyes: Can I ask Mrs. de Jesus what city you come from?

Ms. de Jesus: I'm from Puerto Rico.

Mr. Reyes: You were talking about your daughter. What school system are you talking about?

Ms. de Jesus: The city?

Mr. Reyes: New York City?

Ms. de Jesus: Yes. Manhattan.

Mr. Reyes: I had a feeling.

Ms. de Jesus: And another thing — there is another thing I would like to bring out.

Okay. I work for the Child Administration. Another — what I have learned by working in the agency — throughout the agency — is that every time this Latin child there that doesn't know the language, they tag them as they are retarded.

That's where I come in. I speak to the child and I say, "Wait a minute. He doesn't know how to speak the language. The kid is not retarded."

They label them like that. And I'm telling you this as God's truth. And this has to be changed.

Mr. Reyes: May I just comment, because the struggle for bilingual education is one that many people in this room and on this panel have fought for many years.

And I think we need to understand that bilingual education has goals of learning English, but also learning math, and reading, and science, the core curriculum. And there are those of us in the struggle, others who have fought for it, but understood that it is also Spanish maintenance. It is developing, if not maintaining, Spanish literacy.

And one of the problems of bilingual education is that, in fact, the school systems as a whole have resisted them over the years.

In New York City we did a study in 1985, when I was not on the board, about the board of education, ten years of neglect.

The teachers weren't trained or supported by principals, by the school system.

The fact that a child is tested, as your daughter, because of the Spanish surname, is part of the community struggle that I speak of in New York. The community agency, along with Puerto Rican Legal Defense — I work with those people, so I know that struggle. We were seeking and continue to seek opportunities for students to get a full education. And the problem of students being over tested, because of the Spanish surname, is something which needs to be dealt with.

But the truth is that for many years there were students who should have been in bilingual programs, who were in the mainstreams, sinking or swimming, and we need to deal with the issue of students who don't belong in a bilingual program, because the home language, and the use by parents, as well as the student, is English.

In fact, most of the students who benefit from bilingual programs today are Dominicans, Salvadorean, Mexicano, students who are new immigrants.

And the real problem, as I see it, from a Puerto Rican perspective, is those programs have been one of the few areas in the public school system that have dealt with issues of language, bilingualism, and culture. And that it is in the mainstream that we see very little in terms of culturally-inclusive curriculum that is Puerto Rican, Latino, and that emphasizes the importance of language and culture.

So we have to deal with what I think is a real issue of students who are mislabeled and because of that don't get the education that they want.

The vast majority of the students, who are Spanish dominant, need those programs. And the problem is, whether it's the federal government, the state government, or city government, providing the resources to

make sure that the bilingual teachers are fully proficient in both languages, and that they are fully skilled — skilled in math and science, and it is not just a matter of language, so that students get a — a student coming from Nicaragua needs to learn Spanish —learn math in Spanish in high school — we have to make sure that they are getting high school level math and not grammar school level math, because of the assumption that they need to learn English and not math before they can go on with their education.

The Audience: Yes. I'm a little bothered whenever I hear somebody say that a student doesn't belong in a bilingual program, because my definition of a bilingual program is one that works both ways. And a good bilingual — a developmental bilingual program —would — a kid who speaks only English should benefit just as much as the child who speaks only Spanish.

And I think the reality is that too often we have been forced to accept by the system so-called bilingual programs which are sort of ESL programs —English as a second language program. Is that a valid worry?

Dr. Nieto: Yes. I think that that is a —in fact, it is really funny, when you have a —language because my husband is a bilingual teacher, so I hear this — every day.

He is a primary teacher in a small city in Massachusetts, by the name of Holyoke, Massachusetts.

Holyoke now has the distinction of having 75 percent of its student body being Puerto Rican. And the interesting thing is that the kids — the kids pick things up right away. You know, so when they say they are bilingual, there is a stigma attached to that. I think, why should there be a stigma attached to people who speak two languages. When you think about it, it's really outrageous.

But there is a stigma attached to it because the — I think the program, the way it has been developed over the years, not because this is what the parents wants, and not because this is what the teachers want, or that because — developed so that it a compensatory program, rather than an enrichment program. So that kids learning bilingual are seen as somehow deficient, rather than enriched.

...my kids, who are bilingual, could not be in bilingual programs because they spoke English too well.

And so there are teachers who are in bilingual programs, who when they hear the term — when they use the term "bilingual," it means somebody who speaks Spanish. That's what bilingual means.

And the kids who are truly bilingual are in the so-called mainstream program, or in the so-called regular program, rather than in the bilingual program.

But it used to really bother me that my kids, who are bilingual, could not be in bilingual programs, because they spoke English too well. And, you know, they just wouldn't take them because they were — of course, we also didn't live in a town — town that I live in that had a bilingual program.

But I think that we have to start looking at and I know that — a lot more kids than a lot of other people, in a lot of places around the country, too —to try to get the compensatory label lifted from bilingual education so that we will understand that, in fact, kids who can speak two languages are, indeed, gifted. You know, they are not suffering from a deficient.

We also need to begin to think about bilingualism, biculturalism or multi-culturalism, and bi-cognitive, because our children also learn differently...

They are — as one of my colleagues said, becoming bilingual, becoming bilingual, rather than, you know, some other — some other label.

When I started teaching in New York City public schools about 26 years ago, or something — 27 years ago, I was — not only did they label kids, but they labeled teachers who taught the kids.

Now, in the school where I taught, there had never been a Puerto Rican teacher before, and so they were very surprised that there was such a thing as a Puerto Rican teacher.

But, be that as it may, when I started teaching, I was made the NES teacher, the NE teacher. And what that was was the non-English teacher.

Now, I speak English very well, thank you, but I was the NE teacher, because the kids would be NE kids. They were the non-English kids.

Now, why can't we turn that around and instead say, Hispanic-speaking kids, — speaking kids, the Polish or Vietnamese-speaking kids. But we, instead, turned it into something negative. And that has really been a problem in bilingual education for many years.

Mr. Ericksen: Let me go to a couple of people who have had their hands up. Sir, in the second row, and then the lady behind you in the fourth row.

Do you have some questions for the panel?

Mr. Castaneda: I just have a few comments. My name is Raul Castaneda. And I'm with the Navy, but I'm also a dad.

I have a 19 year old daughter, and I have a 12 year old son.

My 19 year old daughter, she's at Harvard University, and my son is at Lake Broderick. He's in the seventh grade.

What I'd like to comment on is the fact that this young man brought out a very good point about the expectancy — on Hispanics.

We did a study back, I guess, when I was —in the late '70s, when I was getting my degree, on stereotypes. And one of the things that we did is we told these teacher, this educator, that she was receiving five of the best kids that the school ever had to offer, but in fact, it was a lie. These kids were doing poorly in school.

Yet, because we told this teacher that these kids were the brightest, and they were probably going to — we lied to her. We told her that these kids were probably going to give her a hard time, but not because they are dumb, because they are super smart and it is going

to be really hard, we challenge you, to keep them in their seats because they are too smart for you. Okay.

And guess what happened? These kids turned around and they were the top kids, not only in the class, but in the school. There is your proof of changing — if we change the stereotypes of the teachers, we will get good students. Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Ericksen: Thanks.

Ms. Garcia: My name is Lucilla — Garcia, and it is odd that we would be talking of bilingual education because I represent the California Association for Bilingual Education in California.

I hold the — I'm the Director of State Legislative Affairs. And what you're talking about is change in a system, a change of philosophy, a change that bilingual education is not just for what we used to know as limited English proficient students. Now in California, because of our policies, the changes, we are calling them English language learners.

Part of the role of education is to help people to deal with stereotyping, deal with our own stereotyping.

And everyone looks at us and they say, "But aren't all of those kids" — you got the point. You know, they should not be separated. They are children who are acquiring a second language, just like anybody is acquiring the first language.

I'd also like to say that I'm a former —well, I'm still in the process — an English language learner. But I came to the United States when I was 17 years old. And came to Mission High School in San Francisco, with the same stereotypes that all of you are speaking of. I did not want to be labeled an — student, because that meant going into a closet, that meant not having access to the core curriculum. That meant not having an equitable — an equity, in terms of education.

So I determined that I was going to become a bilingual educator. And now, 21 years later, I am also publishing a math textbooks for — and they tell me, the minute I say that, they say, "Oh, you are doing the Spanish ones."

See, once again, the stereotype doesn't stop with the children. It also — we have to live with that.

I am the county coordinator for Santa Clara County, which is one of the largest counties in the state of California as well, and it is the same dilemma. I — you know, we have to fight for what we have accomplished so far.

And I think that the question, and if I'm correct, and the reason why I flew over here, is because we have to move forward. We know what the issues are. What are we going to do about it? And how are we going to form those coalitions?

Now — is one of the largest organizations, among with NAVI, and I would like to invite all of you to our conference. It will be on February 2nd through the 5th. We're bringing everyone [in] higher education. We're bringing — as you said, Mr. Reyes, you are an educator, not a politician. But I think it would behoove us to become politicians in order to make a difference for our children as well.

And I don't know, in terms of inclusive, you know, whether it is in English, or it is in Spanish, or if it is in Japanese, or whatever language it may be. We also need to begin to think about bilingualism, biculturalism, or multi-culturalism, and bi-cognitive, because our children also learn differently, and I think that's where we also have missed the mark.

Mr. Ericksen: Okay. Thank you. I'm going to — Dr. Grant, you've been listening to the conversation about a culturally-inclusive curriculum —being dominated by language issues. How can you react to that and how does that hit you with what you think your work has been?

Dr. Grant: Well, two things. One, I usually say there are really no experts in multi-cultural education because all of us are really students, and we are always constantly learning. And I find myself in these sessions learning as much as I can.

But in one of the things that I would say —and really in synthesizing what has been said, I would like to move the discussion that it is just not sufficient to talk about a culturally-inclusive curriculum. Multi-cultural education is about a way of thinking.

When you start looking at it as a way of thinking, then you deal with English, you deal with art, you deal with language, you deal with what is served in the cafeteria on Wednesday, as well as on Friday, what is going to be in the curriculum, and like — it is an education that is multi-cultural. In other words, it — every aspect of education, K through college, and it is all about education.

But as I listened to us talk, the other thing that — I was struck with two things. One — and I will only give you one of them, because I want to come back to the other one before we leave. Is we are talking about what's happening.

I would like to move this more to action, and to us who are here. We are kind of putting it out there.

What I want to say is, what does this meeting, what does this conference mean, this session, to what we can do tomorrow to begin to make the important changes that's necessary in thinking about an education that's multi-cultural. Be it whether we want to work in language, or with curriculum, and to know that we really can't split them, because they all go hand in hand.

Mr. Ericksen: Are there any politicians out there that have an answer for —

Mr. Cruz: I'm not a politician, but pretty close.

My name is Ron Cruz. I'm with the United States Catholic Conference, Secretary for Hispanic Affairs.

And one of the things that comes to mind is something that Jane Bello said that is, I think, really critical and — but I think Dr. Grant is making comments on it.

When you look at the sociological, ethnological literature as regards the integration of peoples into — society, there are three major institutions that are pivotal if you are going to be able to become a part of society.

Those institutions are family, church, and local political structures.

And the thing is that we have to learn to do that. My responsibility is to be an advisor to bishops in the

United States as regards to Hispanic public policy issues and ministry issues.

And quite frankly, the same issues that are affecting Hispanics, Latinos, in education is what's affecting us in the church, no matter what church.

And the point is that until we learn how to affirm and support our families, and help them see what their role is in society, not only being providers, but also being leaders in the community — those are necessary points, necessary steps that have to be taken by someone.

What I'm saying to educators is that, as Jane said, that it is not just education that is the issue. That's only one part of the whole process, if I'm not mistaken.

And the thing is that how do we get them, those organizations and associations dealing with families, to support us, and affirm us, and help us look and reflect about these issues that we are dealing with day to day; that our families have AIDS; that our families are subject to different abuses, sexual, spousal abuse, everything, you name it.

And the thing is that we don't have the strategies and we're not utilizing the structures that we have in our network to do those things, and we're pussyfooting around with a bunch of things and not dealing with the issues. And what we need to do then is look at the institutions that we have to fight the issues that we're dealing with because they are institutionally caused.

Education is a big institution and it takes other institutions that have numbers, and resources, and think tanks, to be able to deal with those issues.

And so it just seems to me that we have — as we think about how we deal with the issues, we have to think about families. How do we use the churches? How do we hold our churches accountable? And how do we use our political structure locally and make the political structure accountable to deal with our issues?

And unless we participate, it is not going to happen.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you. Let's — and then we'll get back to the panel.

Mr. Reyes: I just decided I was a politician and not —

Because I think you tried to, in the very beginning, suggest that I was a politician because of the politics of education in New York City, and the rainbow curriculum, and multi-cultural education. And so the struggle is that we are diverse families, we have diverse views about values.

And, unfortunately, when we attempted to develop a multicultural curriculum for early childhood that talked about the diversity of families, that some of the controversy and diversity that we have around family values, were injected into the controversy about the inclusion of sexual orientation into multi-cultural curriculum. And there you saw how education becomes political because, as we sit here today, education and — talked about church, family, and looked at political structures.

The election of the mayor from New York City in November is being determined by — in large part, by the struggle, the cultural, if not religious war that was created in New York City over diversity.

And part of that problem is, I believe, that we — all of those structures that we mentioned, including the church, have not led, but rather followed, often times, the lowest common denominator.

Part of the role of education is to help people to deal with ignorance, to deal with stereotyping, deal with our own stereotyping. And so if women are oppressed in our community because of machismo, that affects the education of young people, the role in the classroom.

It also affects their very life, their ability to survive in the midst of an AIDS epidemic, in the midst of sexual diseases that are rampant. And an education that talks about choices, an education that talks about values, and gets young people to think critically — your parents say — your mother says this, and your friend down the block says that. What do you say? Study. Learn about your body. Learn about the biology of your body. Learn about the sociology of the choices that you have to make.

And ultimately we, as adults, facilitate young people being able to make educated choices.

I may not want my son, who is two and a half years old today, in ten years, or in 15 years, to be sexually active, but how do I prepare him as an educator to understand about self respect, to understand about discipline, to understand about dangers of disease in the modern world, and how to protect himself.

That's something that, as a family, part of a family, as an educator — ties in issues of identity and culture, and values.

But all of our institutions, including the church, have to help young people to use education to free themselves, free themselves from prejudice, free themselves from ignorance, and free themselves from whatever form of bondage they may get into, whether it has to do with teenage pregnancy, or bias against somebody because they are gay, and — that homosexuality is wrong.

These are difficult questions and we need to talk about them publicly.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you. Okay.

Ms. Romero: My name is Celia Romero. I'm from the University of Chicago, the Harris School of Public Policy. I'm a graduate student.

I'd like to address Dr. Grant's comment about solutions. And I think that it has to start with us individually. Obviously it is a large systemic problem that is very difficult to fight, but we need to start with us individually and our children. And we need to tell them not to check their culture at the door when they go to school, and that their culture is very valuable to us in our homes, and also in their schools, so as these changes start to happen, that they will be there and ready to take their place, wherever they deserve to be.

And we need to tell them not to check their culture at the door when they go to school, and that their culture is very valuable to us in our homes, and also in their schools...

Mr. Ericksen: Do you want —

Dr. Grant: Yes. Let me say this. The gentleman

who said he was moving toward being a politician, but he was not quite there. You listed three major institutions of society. The churches, the family, and you talked about the political unit.

I want to say the third one are schools. And I don't think we ever need to back away, because this is something where all of our kids, in this country, must come.

The other thing I think we need to be aware of is there is a difference between education and schooling.

Often we need to educate our kids, but we need to make certain that schools employ the kind of curriculum, the kind of attitude, that help prepare our kids to make them understand the issues that we are talking about.

But I agree with you. It's like Michael Jackson said, "You start with the person in the mirror." You start with yourself.

We can talk about all of the problems wherever. But until we say, "What can I do before I leave this conference, to begin to make steps to make things better," and not just to blow it off, then we are placing the burden over there.

I say to you that it is right here is where we start, and then we move out from there.

Mr. Ericksen: Let's get the gentleman in the next to the last row and then we'll get to you.

Mr. Acosta: My name is Henry Acosta (sp. ph.) I work for the U.S. Student's Organization here in Washington.

I think it is very important that we look at the political question. The school board, who gets elected. Religion right is very — very intolerant, very organized, and it doesn't matter. We can have all the plans and all the suggestions, and all the reasoning behind it, but if we don't sit on those boards and determine policy, it means absolutely nothing.

So we are talking about political clout this morning, and we have to get registered to vote. We have to really participate in those elections.

In New York City, where they elected the school board, I believe 15 percent voted, or something less than that. And if they are determining the curriculum in the schools, where the majority of the people are people of color.

...every political education is educational. So that we have to look at our politicians and learn, learn from what they are doing.

So I have a serious problem with that, and I think that we have to look at the political question and get out there and register to vote, and vote in numbers, because if we don't, then we'll be continuously perpetuating this Eurocentric exclusionary education, and it means absolutely nothing what we are doing.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you. The other gentleman.

Yes, you can work your way up there.

Ms. Nieto: I just want to respond in terms of this dichotomy that we seem to be setting up between politics and education.

I always go back to what Carlo Fredo (sp. ph.), the Brazilian educator said, and that is that education is always political. It is always political. So every single decision that we make, whether it is what — you know, what we have in the lunch room on Wednesday — every educational decision is political.

But I have also come to understand that every political decision is educational. So that, we have to look at our politicians and learn, and learn from what they are doing. If we don't like what they are doing, we have to make sure that we get them to change it —and so that educational policy —

Mr. Ericksen: Okay. Yes, sir.

Mr. Quanares: My name is José Quanares (sp. ph.) and I'm an undergraduate student from the University of — and my question is in regards to the multi-culturalism and how that is carried out in the classrooms.

If we continue to splinter ourselves and not realize the diversity with the unity that we have, we're not going to help ourselves.

For me that multi-culturalism implies a certain type of interaction, or exchanges of ideas, of different groups, different cultural entities — people.

But yet, I see that as a people, from living in this society, we are not yet at that position to truly interact at that level because, you know, our socialization has kind of put us in this inferiority complex in a sense; right.

And yet — and so, for my — my question or my statement is that, how is it that you are going to get to that level of interaction while we are still in this inferiority complex, and to get rid of this inferiority complex, we are like really teaching ourselves to really be part of our culture, be part of our history, be part of our heroes, and what have you, but that it creates a certain environment where people get really eccentric, or, you know, a real nationalist in a sense, and that's really dangerous, to a certain extent. But it is necessary, but it is dangerous.

And so I — I pose the question that, to what point can you have a nationalist or very centralistic curriculum before you can get the interaction going?

Mr. Ericksen: Anybody — all right. Go ahead, Dr. Grant.

Dr. Grant: I have a book that you should read. It's called After the School Bell Rings. And this will give me an opportunity to say two things.

It was a study of a school in which there was a large number of Hispanics, African-Americans, whites, and a few Asian-Americans, who had just come over.

And we spent three years in the school. And the only thing I want to say about the study is, as we talked to the students who were in the school, what they said was by being together, as a group, all groups, it was a lot more fun, they enjoyed it much more. It was a greater — a far greater experience.

And that's going to allow me to — into something that was said earlier this morning at the luncheon. They said, earlier when we were having lunch together, Sonia, Luis, and I, I leaned over to them and said, "One of the things I really want to do real soon is for us to get together and to write a piece, a piece with a

lot of publicity, that will speak to Latinos and African-Americans, and other groups coming together." Because as I move about this country, I've been seeing a divisiveness among these groups. All right.

I want to say that. We need to come together.

When I heard at the luncheon the possibility of the coalition and somebody said, "Will it work," what I said I need to do is to find out how I can get in there on Saturday morning to actively participate, to see that it works. All right.

So when I'm talking about an action plan, I am saying, what can we do.

It can work. If we continue to splinter ourselves and not realize the diversity with the unity that we have, we're not going to help ourselves.

And I think when we talk about curriculum of inclusiveness, we're talking about all groups. And I support the language thing.

And I think one of the things we need to do, as we go back to our places, is to look around and say, how can we come together within our ethnic groups, but how can we come together across ethnic groups to begin to build coalitions. Because until that happens, we're going to still be fighting for the crumbs that fall on the floor.

Mr. Ericksen: Let's let the panel respond.

Dr. Nieto: I also want to respond to that issue of nationalism and, you know, do we get too nationalistic. And I think that that is an important issue for us to think about.

But we have to understand why it happens. It happens because people are so hungry. They are so hungry for their affirmation. They are so — you know, I don't think that a lot of our kids have self esteem problems. I think we have turned that on its head and say that the reason that they — that some of them don't do well in school is because they think too much of themselves. They think that they deserve more, actually, and that — and self esteem is a very tricky thing, you know. And it is used a lot in terms of multi-cultural curriculum that, the kids have self-esteem problems, so let's — multi-cultural curriculum and then they'll feel better.

I don't think that's how it works. I think that a lot of kids go to school feeling fine. When they get to school, they don't feel so good anymore because all of a sudden they open up a book and they are not in the book. We have to make sure that all kids get in the book and then they'll feel better again.

So we, I think, are so hungry to feel affirmed that we can go to the extreme of nationalism. And I think that that's an issue that we have to confront. But we should remember that multi-cultural education really has, I think, two basic goals.

One is to help people become really centered in who they are, and become aware of their own identity.

And the other one is for them to develop empathy with others and to try to become aware of the identity of all of those other people, so that they are not in the position of saying, "Well, I'm better than you are," but rather, "I'm good, and I know you are, too."

And that's where I think that multi-cultural education has to begin.

Mr. Ericksen: We'll get the young lady at the microphone and then we'll get back to Jane Bello.

Ms. Baez: Hi. I was raising my hand and the reason I am raising it up is because as we went along, people had made some comments that I wanted to — but I cannot leave this room before making this specific comment.

My name is Maria Baez, and I come from New York City. I'm a product of the South Bronx, and work in the South Bronx.

And now working in the education system and being able to step back and look at it, and responding to what Sonia Nieto has said about labeling teachers and students, basically us, as professionals, we have to teach our children to be proud of what they are and what they can be. Meaning they are Latinos; they are black; meaning they are Haitians; they are Jewish; whatever. But we have to teach our children to be proud.

And responding by what Dr. Carl Grant said was, I think we wouldn't be here — a lot of us wouldn't be here, and I can respond by myself — I wouldn't be here if I didn't want to make a difference in the education system, or in the United States as an overall.

And I truly believe that us together, united, as one, we can really do a lot, not for us, but for our children that are growing up. And working in the South Bronx with AIDS patients, working in the South Bronx with patients and people who are affected of so many things, and education, makes me realize how much more I have to work, and how much politically conscious I have to be, and how much education I have to give my community because they are the one that I'm teaching, and they are looking up to me, so that I could bring them back information. And I give them a little bit of what I know.

But we should remember that multi-cultural education really has, I think two basic goals. One is to help people ...become aware of their own identity. And the other is...to become aware of the identity of all of those other people.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you, very much.

Jane, did you have a comment?

Ms. Bello: Just briefly. I — an example that within the arts field in New York City, is actually commonalities, not necessarily differences, that have brought us together. Brought a series of communities very different culturally together. When it is actually deplorable conditions and we struggled — that Mr. Reyes was talking about — that brought us together. And we sort of rallied, African-Americans, the Asian people, Asian-Americans, Latinos, a series of people, around one concept, and that is — cultural diversities.

And I guess maybe, you know, because it is a very — sort of very focused campaign, it has been a very good experience knowing that we've worked very well together, irrespective of our differences, and irrespective of our need to maintain our own independence and our own individuality.

So I just wanted to talk about that as an example in New York City where this has worked.

Mr. Ericksen: Okay. Thank you, very much.

Rusty, go ahead. And, sir, would you like to work your way up to the microphone and I'll let Rusty speak.

...there is a direct link between what's taught in the elementary and secondary schools with what's going on in institutions of higher education.

Ms. Barcelo: I just want to make this point. I think — didn't say.

You know, another institution that we need to look at, in terms of actually training teachers, in terms of institutions of higher education. We certainly are, you know, starved in terms of multi-cultural education on our campuses across the country.

And I think, you know, there is a direct link between what's taught in the elementary and secondary schools with what's going on in institutions of higher education.

And I think we need to remind ourselves that there is a serious lack — in institutions of higher education regarding diverse curriculums, clear across the board.

I mean, I only think about what happened at UCLA, in terms of the Chicano Studies Program, and what's happening to ethnic studies programs. And, if anything, there seems to be more resistance now, because I would argue that there is more of us than there was in the 1960s when these courses were first introduced on college campuses. And I don't think that's by accident. I think in some ways we have been successful in turning — we are turning out people.

I mean, look at this room, for heaven's sake. I mean, that wasn't so 15, 20 years ago.

And so I think we do have to look at —someone talked about board members and school board members. We also have to look at the regents.

I mean, at the University of Iowa right now, we are considering a policy whereby faculty have to warn their students about what is being taught if it is sexually explicit. Now, that has all kinds of implications, in terms of debate for — you know, academic freedom, you know, freedom of speech issues, et cetera.

So I think there are many, many complex issues.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you. Go ahead, sir.

Mr. Taylor: Thank you, very much. I am Paul Taylor, a state legislator from New Mexico. And I'm just a little politician.

And I'm just a little bit of an educator, because that was my background before I got — I'm really puzzled. Should I go to the one on environment, because I'm so concerned about what's happening along the border, or should I come here, because I am so interested in multi-cultural education and its place in the curriculum.

I don't think — and to use Sonia Nieto's words, this has been a reaffirmation for me, hearing not only the panelists, but those of you who have spoken. And I get very emotional about these things.

Let me give you just an example. I have been around a long time. I was around when bilingual education was introduced — before that there was an —program to — Title II, and we applied through that program, and started the program.

One of the things that we felt that we first had to do was to be sure that the children had a good enough concept that they could make their way through the 12th grade and feel good about themselves.

But one of the ways that we felt that we had to do that was to bring the parents in very early, and make them feel that they were a part of this little program.

Now, let me tell you what happened as a result of that. One of our students, who was in the bilingual program, was caught in the urban renewal —they lost their school. And the parents were very upset about it because at that school we had all the qualities of wonderful things you should have in a school. You had good parental involvement. You had a wonderful bilingual program. You had teachers who cared, and teachers who moved from first grade to fourth grade, in a progressive curriculum, with the same students, then four through six. Everything was right.

They were devastated that they had to lose their school. And the school board — unfortunately, I thought — asked me to coordinate that move with the parents.

I met week, after week, after week. It was an emotional ordeal for them, as well as me. But finally they came to a conclusion. They said, "We have to talk to the school board. Would you ask them to call for a special meeting of the school board so we could tell them what we want?"

I called that special meeting. The board —a total non-Hispanic board — met with them. They said, "These are the things that we want. We know we are going to lose our school, but we know that you have money coming in from the sale of that school for urban renewal. We would like you to use that money to build a library complex at the school where our children are going. We would like our principal to go to this school" — it was the school that — it was close by —"We would like all the bilingual teachers to go to that school. We don't want to lose any of our teachers. We want the same curriculum that our children have been involved in."

This was — they were asking for the moon, they thought. Those parents grew up in a bilingual program and they were taught to be effective speakers, on behalf of their children, and on behalf of themselves.

Do you know what the school board said? "Your principal can go to this new school. We'll use the money to build a library, extra classroom, which will be needed to house these children. We will let the children go to that school, if they want to go to that school. If they want to go to some other school, that will be fine."

They got everything they wanted. They would not have gotten what they wanted had it not been the affirmation of that community to those people speaking up on behalf of their children and on behalf of themselves.

Now, that's what a bilingual, multi-cultural program did for that school. And that was real affirmation.

Now, if I can be a little bit of a politician, and I don't want to take all the time, but let me just tell you. When I was first — an English-only bill came up. I was absolutely horrified about that.

What the sponsor of that bill did was she went to various people and — of course you don't know this, but some people sign bills and they don't know what's in them. And so Hispanics, and some Native Americans signed that bill.

It got to be such a problem that the governor, who was a Republican governor, became very concerned about it. And the Speaker of the House, who had sent it to five different committees to kill it, became very concerned about it and he brought it to the House floor.

And there we talked about it. And, unfortunately, those people who were Hispanics, and Native Americans, who had signed that bill, had to rise from their seats and say, "Mr. Speaker, I would like my name stricken from that bill." It was very embarrassing to them. They almost scooted under their chair after they got through saying this.

One by one, no one ended up by signing the bill.

The lady who had sponsored the bill said, "I want you to know the reason." This is — "I want you to know the reason why I entered that bill. I had a maid who bought a vacuum cleaner and she was Hispanic, and she didn't know the language, or she would not have bought that vacuum cleaner, had she known English."

Now that was a little bit — statement.

Mr. Ericksen: All right. Thank you.

Mr. Taylor: I want you to know that after that we had an English-plus bill, a memorial. It passed the House unanimously.

Mr. Ericksen: Okay. Great.

Mr. Reyes: As a person who is not a total politician and is interested in environment and bilingual education, I just wanted to respond to Mr. Taylor.

I think you came to the right place. And just to give you an example of the story you gave in New Mexico, here in D.C.

The community — the Latino community, which is largely an immigrant population — has had to struggle for Bell — multi-cultural — high school program that is a multi-cultural school with bilingualism as one of its elements, and core components, and the Oyster School, which is a two-way bilingual program, which is a model nationally, where students who are bilingual learners, who are Spanish dominant, and students who are bilingual learners, who are English dominant, and who come from all diverse backgrounds.

Those two programs were under the gun and because the Latino community in D.C. struggled —parents, educators, and others — forced their local school system to keep them open.

The issue of struggle and environmentalism is — to make the connection — is one that's — in New York City we have a school system that opened up 11 days late because of an asbestos scandal and scare, in which the problem of lack of information, and lack of security about the safety in the school, turned into a solution. One, because the parents got organized, demanded, and protested, and put pressure on members of the board, and the city government.

But in that situation, why is it that Latino students and African-American students are in environments where they have to worry about asbestos or lead. It is because of an education system and a political system in which people of color are not valued people, and therefore toxic wastes and — like asbestos — can be allowed to continue.

And so you have another school in Williamsburg, where young people, called the Toxic Avengers, working with the community organization —have used the issue of toxic waste as an area for study, and to organize, and to fight the local nuclear — a facility nearby that uses toxic waste, which may or may not be radiating, because it is run by a company called Radiac.

That's an education that's multi-cultural, because young people understand that where there are lead paint chips that are falling from a bridge into their community, or whether it is asbestos in the community, or other toxic wastes, understand that education is connected to power, and the power that they have to organize, to get educated about issues, to use math and science, to study issues like toxins, and then to get out and do something about it.

And we talk about the problems. The solutions are organization.

In fact, today, as we heard this morning, the issue of solutions was brought up. We have solutions, whether it's the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Bill that Congressman Serrano will be presenting tomorrow, along with his colleagues, or other issues.

We have the reauthorization of Title 7, which is the bilingual programs, and reauthorization of Chapter 1. These are areas where we need to, in our diversity — people in the Southwest, people in the Southeast, people in the Northeast have to struggle to insure the targeting of resources to our community.

Those parents grew up in a bilingual program and they were taught to be effective speakers on behalf of their children, and on behalf of themselves.

We can't allow the federal government and Congress, for example, to continue to have mandates about asbestos and lead and then not to fund them.

We have mandates, as we should, for bilingual instruction, because we have a growing immigrant population. We have to be sure that there is funding and resources. And right now the struggle, because of the immigrant scare that many people on the right are pushing, that we need to struggle to support bilingual programs, because they — bilingual ballots are under the gun, and so that's a point of organizing that I think we can do.

Mr. Ericksen: Mr. Reyes, I'm going to stop you there. We have a lot of people we haven't heard from yet, and we do want to make sure — go ahead, sir. You,

by the microphone. I would request that you keep your comments fairly short so we can get to all of you.

Mr. Balista: My name is Alfredo Balista (sp. ph.) I'm from — agency, and — Hispanic Affairs, and I'm also president of — local council. I'm coming here for —

I have been listening for awhile. I don't want to return home — one with a lot of the good things I've been hearing here, and another one with all the problems — compared with the problems we have down there. A lot are the same problems.

...why is it that Latino students and African-American students are in environments where they have to worry about asbestos or lead? It is because of an educational system and a political system in which people of color are not valued...

It seems to me that we all have problems in our areas and — problems are even more complicated.

Dr. Grant was talking about a coalition and an action. From the — point of view, as I'm the president of — we are sick and tired of meetings, task forces, meeting with school boards, meeting with — In 1991, we took — Secretary — to federal court. We ended up with a consent agreement in order to implement the educational program in the public school system in Florida.

That's almost three years now. Tied up with that — we have a federal order in court that they have to fire — I mean hire — a certain amount of African-American teachers to integrate part of the staff, the teaching staff of the county. It is the largest county in the whole area — in terms of teachers.

So far they have been very successful in the hiring of African-Americans from the LEP Program —

We are meeting with the parents, and we are taking the issue to the board, that we going to pay them — we cannot wait anymore to go back and talk to the politicians, talk to the board, talk about more studies, about pilot programs, about bilingual education system or whatever.

The issue is that our kids go to school. They have a united English proficiency — whatever they call it — it's a matter of labels. They are declared — I don't like to use the term, but they treat them like they have some learning disabilities, and they put them in special programs. It is a setback. Some of those kids have a very high IQ and they are very intelligent.

If we don't get involved — if we don't get involved with the institutions already that are working — like — any other groups, NAACP — we're not going to get anywhere. We can be the whole year talking about — talking about analysis, statistics. If we don't do what you were saying, some sort of an action, we don't get anywhere.

Mr. Ericksen: Okay. Thank you very much. Yes, sir?

Mr. Garcia: Good afternoon. I am Carlos Garcia from New York City. I'm a news reporter.

I am here this afternoon. Too many people worry about — about what happened about asbestos, about pregnancy, about so many things, but I don't hear nobody talk about what happens after college, after school.

We — every day some line, our line, our people, our — because no Spanish. When they finish the school, when they finish the college have nothing to do because no jobs. The big city — so many jobs. I think nobody worry about it. We don't have nothing to offer to those people when they finish the school. I saw so many people graduated from the college driving taxis, vendors in the street. And I saw so many lives in the hospital, shooting, because after school what they do is selling drugs in the street, things to do to live. I would like to have some comments about it.

Mr. Ericksen: Okay, thank you. We're going to try to get back a little bit on focus about — focus on the curriculum here. Do we have anybody else — go ahead.

Ms. Senior: I thought of several things as I've been listening to the different conversations. I'm Maria Nieto Senior, and I'm from San Diego, California. I'm a professor at San Diego State where I train counselors — schools, and I'm also on the Board of Trustees at San Diego Community College.

I've been an educator for a very long time. And a couple of different things are going on there, and I think have always been going on at different levels, that I don't think the schools adequately address. One of the things that's going on now in California that's very, very hot is the whole immigration issue. And how does curriculum respond to the reality that we really do have a lot of children from other countries that are not European countries, but that are — I mean, we have kids in San Diego that came from all over the world, Nigeria, and Nepal, and Cambodia. And there's a white-washing to a very large degree of a lot of things, and I don't think the schools have ever — since I started teaching, ever been very good in talking about the color issues. Whenever we talk in our curriculum about diversity, you know, it's a lot like — they make it real pretty. It's like riding through "It's a Small World" in Disneyland.

That's what it feels like, the curriculum, really, but nobody really talks about the fact that a lot of our conflicts have to do with skin color. The lighter we are, the easier we've got it. That's the truth. The darker we are, the more hell we're going to catch in this society. And I don't think the schools really openly acknowledge it, and people don't really talk about it. I mean, we —Hispanics — instead of the indigenous part, and the Black part, and the other parts of the reality. I don't know if any of you have any ideas on that one, but how we get it to the real stuff, because I know children can deal with it. I've talked with them about those things. But I think very often we don't have them deal with the real issues of the hatred that's being, I think, increasingly evidenced in our society.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you.

The Audience: Yes. I'm — and I'm from Phoenix, Arizona, and I am both an educator and a politician. I guess I have to congratulate Representative Romero because they defeated that English initiative in their state. Arizona did not. And right now Arizona — you

cannot, as public official, as a school board member, as an elected member of the legislator — if I'm caught in public, acting on behalf of my offices, either one of the two, speaking Spanish, I can be impeached or removed from office. That is a real threat. Any employee of the state, any employee of the county can be fired for the same causes. Right now we've — many elected officials have gathered together, and we've filed a lawsuit against the state of Arizona on this issue.

What, I guess, I want to warn you of is that I've been to school board conferences, national, and that group has an active body in those conferences usually, propagating this kind of a mentality. I've been to the state legislature at — San Diego just had a national conference there also, and they have — the biggest lobbyist group I saw was their group.

So I'd like you to go back to your communities and find out if they're active in your communities. This kind of snuck up on Arizona, and now we're having to fight it, and it will undo everything. I was a bilingual teacher for many years, and it will undo everything that you're fighting for in your states. So, just a word of caution, of warning, look for them, the English Only.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you. We have a preliminary concern — state. Do you want to talk or mention, or do a little — as to what's going to happen tomorrow on this?

Mr. Serrano: I will just take a second first of all to — I thank all my cousins who cheered.

Let me just first thank you for this attendance. I keep saying that everywhere we go, but you've got to understand that I'm like a father with a new baby. I'm trying this for the first time, a Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute Issues Conference. It's never been done before. So that all the things you find good, Rita and the staff are geniuses. Anything you find wrong, they will get it right the next year.

But this is historic, and it's getting coverage in the media, and coverage from elected officials and other people that we respect.

Let me tell you what happened. I'll tell you a quick little story to show you that we are growing in power, and why I wasn't with you for the last hour.

And let us take the theme of this conference, the differences that we have, and turn them into strengths.

This is being taped, and it's going to become part of the Town Hall Meeting presentation at six sites throughout the nation on Saturday. I implore you, if you can be here tomorrow for the lunch to hear Janet Reno speak, I would want that. If you can be here tomorrow for dinner, I would implore you to do that. If you can be here early Saturday morning when we tackle on to one issue that we always run away from, I want you to be here. We've run away from the issue that I'm thinking of for the first time in the caucus. The Black Caucus, the Hispanic Caucus will get together on Saturday, and discuss the possibility of can there be a coalition between us. And David Dinkins, the Mayor of New York will speak at eight o'clock in the morning — I know it's early, but please — on the issue of coalition building. Notwithstanding anything you may be hearing now in his campaign, his election in '89, he was able to pull off with coalition. We worked for him. He worked for me in 1990 when all the African-Americans supported me against a Black candidate. Now, that can happen. That's real coalition. When we say, "That's my candidate," — I don't care who runs against him, even one of my own —that's my candidate. And that's why I'm here, and that's why David is mayor. We will tackle that.

But let me give you a quick story that gives me even bumps. I promised myself that I would meet with you every second, yet I missed the last one and a half hours of the conference because something came up on the House floor that you'll be interested in.

...nobody really talks about the fact that a lot of our conflicts have to do with skin color.

A simple unemployment compensation insurance bill was ready to come on the floor to extend the unemployment compensation benefits. Who could not vote for that? But they decided that we're in a new phase where we will pay for every dollar we spend now. So how are we going to pay for it? Any legal documented immigrant, who is now under the plan that says you have to be in the country three years before you reach the age of 62 and benefit and qualify for SSI and disabled benefits, now that would be extended to five years. We quickly reacted.

While I was with you at lunch, Xavier Becerra, I didn't know, was fighting this battle alone, and then I went and joined him. And we took the chance of saying to our leadership, "The staff put that through. We didn't catch it. Whether it's good or bad, the minute you mentioned "immigrant" it's bad for us. You can't do that to us. We're not going to go for it." One phone call to the Black Caucus, and they stood with us, and the session is over, and the bill was not taken up.

I take a very serious political-legislative risk in announcing something that was handled in private. Some people in the audience from the press know that that is a political risk, but it is historic because it continues to show that when the Black Caucus has a problem and negotiates with the leadership of the House or the White House, and knows that even though we're not in that room, the chances of us supporting them on that issue are pretty good, even though they don't know for sure, they have power. And we knew, even though we had not consulted with one single member of the 38 Black members of the House, that this issue they would stand with us, if not all, 90 percent, and that was enough to defeat it.

So the Republicans, when I left, were just asking — and that's not a political statement, just how it was — the Republicans were asking the Democratic leadership, "Why aren't we doing the bill?" The leadership was saying there were some problems on how to pay for it. And we told them we must take this stand,

because on health care that we got to go through, the issue will be immigrants, and on NAFTA the issue will be immigrants, and on housing the issue —in fact, I told them sarcastically but truthfully, that only if the draft came back, the military draft, the issue would now be immigrants.

...unless we confront racism in our policies and our practices, and the curriculum, in textbooks, in hiring practices, and interactions among teachers and students and parents, ...we're really not going to make a difference.

Because for that, they want to use all of us. And Puerto Ricans, who are the only Latinos in the country who are by law born citizens, meaning that a Latino born here from a Mexican father is a citizen, but his father is not a citizen, we take special interest in that immigration issue for two reasons: one, because as citizens we have to be able to protect those who are not; and secondly, I don't have any papers, and I never want to show anybody any papers, and if they want to arrest me, they're going to arrest me. I don't have papers, and I'm never getting any.

I have my dog tags from the military service, and that's my ID. If they want an ID, they can look at that. It's an ID or — So I wanted to tell you that it was really important. How I do in my job now is to keep this going by imploring you, if you think the story I told you has any sign of a new found power, then you've got to hang around till Saturday when we do the coalition building workshop, but the census figures indicate now many of our people are trying to write a story into it, "Gee, did you hear that Hispanics are going to pass Blacks by the end of 2005?" That's not the story. That's what they want to write. The story is: "Gee, do you realize how many Blacks and Hispanics there will be by the year 2005?"

Let us stay true to this course. Let us understand that we are, at the expense of making all the other workshops angry, in the workshop because this is the tool to get us out of our misery. And let us take the theme of this conference, the differences that we have, and turn them into strengths. My colleagues used to tell me that the one thing that he noticed when he came to the US was that there were so many different Hispanic groups, that they each had a favorite form of beans —

The unity was they all liked beans.

So whether you call them (Spanish phrase) or (Spanish phrase) or grano, we're all in the same boat, and things can only get better.

And always remember one last point, one last point, and then I will leave you, because of the day, the time of day, and the way to do things, there are no four or five-year-olds in this room, and what we do now we don't do for ourselves, we do for some four or five-year-old who is not in the school, needs our help, and will benefit from whatever we do. And we just had a little victory for them, in a small ruling. Yes, a —a very important — this bill that singled out immigrants as the only people who are going to pay for unemployment insurance. Thank you.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you.

Dr. Nieto: I just want to respond to what Maria Nieto Senior, who I'd like to say was my cousin, but in terms of what she said about the issue of —that all here would agree that those of us who have been thinking about multi-cultural education for a long time understand that it has to be fundamentally anti-racist education, and that unless it is, it becomes the — and focus kind of education, which is — you know, might be fun and interesting, but doesn't look at the issues of inequality, structural inequality.

And in fact, some kids leave school — even though we all agree that the issue is so important, some kids leave school in worse shape in some ways than when they enter it, because they really don't have the options that kids should have, and a lot of that has to do with racism, so that unless we confront racism in our policies and our practices, and the curriculum, in textbooks, in hiring practices, and interactions among teachers and students and parents, and unless we look at racism and egocentrism and lingualism, which is language discrimination, all of those kinds of discrimination, we're really not going to make a difference.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you very much. What we're going to do is take a couple of more quick ones from the audience, and then we'll do a wrap-up coming from the far end and ending with this end. Those who have not spoken yet — okay, go ahead, sir. We do have — so we can get you out of here in time.

The Audience: I'm going to try to be very brief, and my English is not so good, so please forgive me for my accent.

I come from New York City, and I was sent by President Dennis Rivera of Local Union 99, and I am proud to say that I belong to the most progressive unions in the whole United States. We represent over 100,000 workers, and we are constantly forming coalitions to change the system. We must register our people, like Professor Grant has said. We must start now, and do it. We brought to New York City the new mayor, Mayor Dinkins. We — because of us, a lot of new Hispanics and Blacks have been elected officials because of the involvement of our union. We are constantly forming coalitions. So all of you can do the same thing with your unions, and start working on political action, and get involved. Don't just sit and wait, because that will never get you anywhere.

...we have the responsibility to educate all children. We cannot select the ones we want to educate.

We also have elected, very recently, Alan Hedessy (phonetic) for city controller. We lost two of our elections for city council by only 70 votes the first time that our people run, so that proves that President Dennis Rivera is on the right track, and he is a very good friend of Congressman Serrano, and thank you very much.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you.

Ms. Deleon: Hello. My name is Liz DeLeon, and I just wanted to say to the panelists here, that as a student, coming from a student's perspective, I've experienced a lot and — and the institution. And I wanted to say that I didn't really — I realize the importance of multi-cultural curriculum at all levels, and I didn't really realize the importance of it until college. And I was wanting to ask the panelists why most of the present multi-cultural curriculum seems to take precedence over funding programs such as including parents in the curriculum?

Mr. Ericksen: Before we get an answer, we'll let the gentleman behind you speak, and I hope that a couple people will address that in their concluding remarks.

Mr. Gonzalez Thank you for letting me speak. My name is Miguel Gonzalez — I'd just like to re-emphasize about you people who have already made it in this world, are professionals. I'd like to see you guys give us, the young ones, an opportunity. Don't forget about — 20 some or so are here. I know there are a lot of us that will be impacting the White House or whatever we go to in any way. I'm from Kansas, and not many people know that there are Hispanics in Kansas.

And many of the problems that I've heard here today are new to our community because it is not an established community like — I would like to hear from the panel what type of things should I do about when I go back to Kansas and try to organize political or activities?

Mr. Ericksen: Okay. Another good question to the panel. Go ahead, sir.

Mr. Flores: My name is José Flores, and I'm from Ohio, and not only am I a Mexican, but I'm a judge, and you don't see too many judges, Hispanic judges out in the Midwest.

But I feel compelled to say something as a follow-up to what this young lady said to the essence and to the effect that we cannot be more cultural than — and we have it within our power, in a very small way, in a very innocent way to help in that regard.

And let me cite a personal experience. When I first took the bench — I was a municipal judge before I became a state judge. When I first took the bench, if somebody appeared before me who could not speak English, I would begin to talk to them in Spanish, and this blew everybody's mind, everybody on the court. "What's he saying? Is it Spanish, Italian? You know, what's he saying? Should he be saying that?" And I'm laughing now. I'm looking because — judges sit up there and you can see everybody out in the courtroom. To me, bilingual is a positive thing, meaning that you know two languages. When people talk about bilingual education, they think of it as a negative, that somebody does not know how to speak English. See, I'll just twist it around.

Now, we have it within our power to show that bilingualness is a positive thing. Obviously, I know how to speak English because I wouldn't be up on that damn bench in the first place if I didn't. So now, instead of the defendants being known as defendants who don't know how to speak English, I am known now as the judge who speaks two languages. And they say, "Here comes the judge that speaks two languages." Some know it's Spanish, some don't know. But I think it's kind of humorous, but it's serious that instead of defendants not knowing English, we now have a judge who knows two languages. But nobody would know that had I not used my Spanish.

And all of us have it within — I — don't answer, but I ask rhetorically, how many of you use Spanish out in public, in your answer to your —

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you. Please stay with us, and we're going to get the answers to a couple of the questions. And let's start with Jane Arce Bello.

Ms. Bello: I just wanted to say that — it's a time to live upon the hyphen, and that's Hispanic-Americans — from the hyphen.

I experienced — it's a wonderful sort of way of looking at it. I experienced a lot of the struggles that were explained to us. And I actually feel there's an organization that may have a tremendous impact on my life, and that organization is —

And the philosophy of the process is that —in — I think are critical, and should be considered, and the support of making this and — organizations —should be considered as a part of the solution as well.

I think we need to let them know that they have a right to dream, that they have a right to education, and it's our responsibility to make sure that they get it.

And I just want to say that I guess despite the dismal situation that we're in, I guess what — the point that Congressman Serrano just made gives me a real sense of hope, and so I'm sort of elated.

And lastly, I just want to let everyone know that tomorrow we'll be making available copies of a series of recommendations that the Latino arts community has presented to President Clinton. And this is a very small step, but it's a very important step in moving toward that national cultural rights policy that I spoke about. So when the copies are available, if you find it important enough, and I would hope you do, to make a support by sending a letter to the President and his administration. Thank you.

Dr. Nieto: I would like to spend a couple of minutes talking to you about something that I was thinking about — today — and that is, where do we have an impact? That also relates to a lot of the issues that came up today.

All right. So we know what these issues are. Now, what can do about it? So I have thought of a few things that I talk to my students about all the time, who are teachers or going to be teachers. But I presented to — you're not necessarily, teachers but I know that some of you are, but as parents, as people who live in communities, elected officials and so on, and students as well.

I think that the first thing that we need to come to terms with is that we should do things where we can have an impact. Now, I'm saying that because too often teachers and school systems and school board members will say, "Well, what do we do? You know, look, the parents are alcoholics. They don't speak English. They abuse their children. They do this. They do that." And

sometimes, obviously, there are kids who are coming from some poor families. There's poverty, there's racism, all those kinds of issues. But not all kids come from those circumstances, even if the kids are low income kids.

But even with those kids we have the responsibility to educate all children. We cannot select the ones that we want to educate. We can't just say we're going to educate the English speaking middle class children. You know, we have to educate all children, so we have that responsibility. And we have to think about what we can change, not what we can't change. So that's why I always focus on schools. I think that schools can change a lot of things that we do.

...this multi-cultural education is about a way of thinking, and once you gain that way of thinking, whether you're talking about curriculum, testing, standards, whatever you're talking about, politics, you have a different view...

I basically have five recommendations. One is that we need to create school cultures that believe in and — all students. A lot of these things take, not a lot more money, but a lot more heart, and a lot more belief and feeling that children can learn.

Secondly, I think we need to in schools use the language and culture that students bring to school as a basis for learning, rather than to understand them as deficits. So, in other words, that kids come to school speaking in Spanish, which I think is an advantage. How can we take advantage of that they bring to school with them?

Third is that we need to move students — to move beyond students' cultures and languages to explore other realities, and that's where we get away from nationalism to multi-culturalism.

We also need to listen to students and to parents. And I say this as studies that I've been in, and I'm sure that Carl has found the same thing when he did the research for his — for the study that he was telling you about — I've found it very interesting in talking to students in schools where I went to, that they were just thrilled to have people talk to them and ask them about their education, because that doesn't happen usually. People don't say to them, "What do you want to learn? What's important to you? How do you feel about this?" And there was particular young woman who I interviewed — a young Puerto Rican woman. I went to here house, and her mother said to me, "Senora Nieto. You're Ms. Nieto. Finally I get to meet you." She said, "I have to tell you, my daughter hasn't stopped talking about the interview that you had with her." And I was just shocked because this young woman barely said anything when I interviewed her. She was very shy and self-conscious, and her mother said, "She even calls me into the bathroom to tell me about it. She is so happy that someone is asking her about her education and what she wanted out of her education."

And I think that's a lesson for all of us, that we need to listen to kids. Ask them, "What do you want, and how can we help you get that?" And the same with parents, which I know often doesn't happen, and often are not asked.

And, finally, I think that we ought to let all students know that they have options, because that I think is the saddest thing, that kids believe that they don't have options. There are too many young people who I've spoken to, who when you mention graduating from high school, going on to college, they just look at you as if you're from another planet. They say, "No, I couldn't possibly do it." I think we need to let them know that they have a right to dream, that they have a right to education, and it's our responsibility to make sure that they get it.

Dr. Grant: I just have two — a couple things. One, I want to say to the gentleman who's 22-years-old, who's going back. I want to pick up on what Sonia just said, that although there are few opportunities, in other places there are a lot of opportunities. At the University of Wisconsin at Madison, which is rated as one of the best education programs in the country, we have very few Latinos at the University, and it is not that difficult to get in. I mean, very often when I go to different meetings I look around and say, "Where is the Hispanic representation?" It's not there, and it needs to be there, so we need some more Latino scholars who will come on, and who will keep moving, who will join Sonia and Luis and the rest. That's for certain. There are a lot of opportunities.

The other thing more explicitly I want to say, as we speak today, the new ASEA Bill, American Secondary Education Act for 1993 is coming down from the White House and Congress. What I think we need to do is to be looking at that, asking the legislature —I mean, the Congress persons to look at it, their aides, to see what's in there. How does it speak and reflect a multi-cultural focus? Because with that bill is money. With that legislation is money. So if we want to talk about what to do, how can we do it, one of the things we need to do is to find out what's there in the bill, find out how we need to make it more responsive to our particular needs.

The last thing I want to say is I think we need many more meetings like this. I was in a meeting in Boise, Idaho just two weeks ago, which was predominantly all Latino, and when I walked in the room I said, "Like, wow, this is terrific." I mean, to me it was terrific, and I want to say that I like what was said up here earlier. I think as different groups —not only Blacks and Hispanics, but Koreans and others, we need to begin to come together, and put down bridges where we can talk to one another, because otherwise, Schlessinger will be right, the United States, there will be more vulcanization and the splitting up of the country. No, that's not what this is about. This is about unity in making that work, the inclusiveness work.

And the last thing, education, this multi-cultural education is about a way of thinking, and once you gain that way of thinking, whether you're talking about curriculum, testing, standards, whatever you're talking about, politics, you have a different view —or even

looking at television or looking at movies —that permeates everything that you do.

Ms. Barceló:: I believe — did the young man from Kansas leave?

The Audience: Yes.

Ms. Barceló:: Well, that's unfortunate, because there are also Latinos in the state of Iowa. And the thing that I would say to him if he was here —so I'll say it to you — is that we are established. We've been there since the late 1800's, so we're not recent arrivals. In fact, I think that's one of the great myths about the midwest, is that we are recent arrivals. There is fourth and fifth generations in the state of Iowa and throughout the midwest. In fact, I would argue, probably one of the best things that ever happened to me as a Chicano from California is that I was sent to Iowa, and I thought had been sent to Siberia my first year.

But in fact, I think, the thing that happened, that put me in touch with my identity, which I had taken for granted in California where everything around me was Mexican, but going to Iowa made me really step outside myself, and really see what was going on. Because when I went to the University of Iowa in 1969, I was one of two Chicanos on our campus, and there were no other ethnic groups. And I told my mother that I was going home in January, and my mother said, "Rusty, where there is one Mexican, there is probably another one."

The thermometer that day was minus 5 degrees, and I didn't know what my mother's statement had to do with me being cold and lonely, but her words were so haunting — and of course, mother's know, right? She didn't tell me to pack my bags up like a good Mexican mother, and have me come home. No, she was sending me a message, and a couple of days later she sent me some freeze-died (Spanish phrase) that arrived in terrible condition. But her message became even stronger. And then I found myself in the library doing some research, and of course, I gravitated to the census, and my mother was right, I wasn't alone.

You know, when I looked at the Chicago Latino population, it was larger than the population of Arizona and Colorado combined. When I looked at the population for Minnesota, Nebraska, Missouri, Kansas, Wisconsin and Iowa, I had to ask myself why was I the only one in our institution of higher education in the state of Iowa?

The state of Iowa has the highest literacy rate in the country. In 1971, according to a civil rights report in the state of Iowa, we had an 80 percent dropout rate among the Latinos. There was something very wrong. What makes me happy is to know that that young man is going to return to Kansas, because that is what we need. We need to keep people in the midwest because I would argue there is a true Latino experience developing in the midwest. Because there are so few of us, we turn together.

So when we talk about coalition and alliance building, I think we can't forget the midwest experience, because so much of the data and reports and studies that have been done have been done in the southwest, and New York and Miami, and that's all fine and well. But with the Midwest Consortium for Latino Research, which I am now chairing, we are going to be implementing a study that will review the educational needs of Latinos in the midwest, because we need to think beyond Chicago and Milwaukee and some of the more urban centers. We are alive and well.

And so I think when we have these kinds of discussions, so often we're discussing these things in terms of a critical mass. A bilingual program in a real town of Marshaltown, Iowa has to be very different than one that's in New York City. So we have to think much broader in terms of how we look at these issues, so I would say the issues that we discussed today truly have to be national and not regional in scope. Thank you.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you very much. Okay, wonderful timing. About two minutes left here.

Mr. Reyes: We started this morning with demographics and the changing population. However, I'd like to end this afternoon's session by challenging us to understand that demography isn't destiny, that our numbers, in and of themselves, are not enough, and that's why we have the panel this afternoon talking about education, and one that is culturally inclusive, because the education that we provide for that growing population is one of the keys, the key to economic success. It's the key to personal identity, and it's the key to coalition building, and integration or transformation in this American society.

And I believe that language and culture and education are the civil rights movement of the 90's for the Latino community...

I'm reminded, many centuries ago in Spain there was a king named Alphonso DeSalvio, who founded a university, and that university — I forget the exact city, I think it was Salamanca. Education took place in five languages and five pulpits, Hebrew, Latin, Greek, Spanish, and Arabic. There was a leader then who understood the importance of building institutions, of building institutions of learning where people could learn together, learn to study their own and each other's histories, and culture, and literatures, and learn to live and fight non-violently in light of the minds together.

We started this morning talking about problems, and we were challenged to talk about solutions. I believe some of the solutions have to do with the legislative battle, and we have already heard that whether it's Title 7, bilingual education, or Chapter 1, Reforms or the Goals 2000 legislation, or immigrant education, that these are areas that we have to work at. And while in education people talk about standards for students, as a Latino community that is diverse, we have to fight also for service delivery standards, which are institutional guarantees, whether it's in the curriculum, the teacher preparation, or infrastructure of schools.

Second is litigation. We have MALDEF and PRLDEF and MENTA. We have institutions that we've created and we need to support in the struggles that they're partaking and defending, bilingual education, or fighting against the US English movement, or fighting for equality in finances. And these are major battles, some

of which prior to ten years. We need to be part of that.

The third role that relates to education is lobbying and advocacy, and as parents, students, educators, as well as legislators. Lobbying for adult education, adult literacy, because we talk about education and this it's just K to 12, and forget that so many of our Latino adult population does not have a high school diploma.

And we can't talk about the connection between education and work, unless we lobby for more resources in adult education.

Mobilizing — education that's multi-cultural is learning that empowers people to take control over their personal life, and dominion life. And therefore, activism is not a '60's phenomenon, it's a '90's phenomenon. And I believe that language and culture and education are the civil rights movement of the '90's for the Latino community, and the civil rights to maintain our identity, our diverse identities while we are incorporated into American society.

And that's an area for coalition building, because if we study the history of the civil rights movement, whether it's the Black struggle, the women's struggle, the Gay Rights struggle, we understand at the bottom it has to be human justice. And so we can ask and demand of our coalition partners, as they demand of us, that respect which is the whole purpose of an education, that you respect the diversity.

And my last two points, we need to, as I said, defend our organizations, but we need to continue to build institutions, and so we shouldn't be afraid of creating schools that are bilingual multi-cultural schools, that become models for institutions and school systems that are taking garden variety students who are expected to be low achievers, that when we do it right, that they do achieve.

And lastly, leadership development. We have fellows from the Congressional Hispanic Caucus today, but there are young people in ASPIRA and many of our institutions who need to participate, and need to be strengthened as future leaders, and whether it's Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, or ASPIRA, or all of the other agencies that we need to support and strengthen them, so that our demography, which today tells us that we are poor and under-educated and under-employed, tells us ten years from now that we are powerful and we are united, and that our pride is based on our achievement.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you all very much for coming in.

Session #2
The Environment

Moderator:

Gustav Mariel
Correspondent, Telemundo

Friday, October 1 PROCEEDINGS

9:00 am - 11:30 am Rayburn House Office Building

Presenters:

Robert D. Bullard
Professor of Sociology
University of California, Los Angeles Center
for African-American Studies

Richard Moore
Co-Chair, Southwest Network for Environmental
and Economic Justice

Rafael Metzger
Director
Special Initiatives, COSSMHO

Paula Gomez
Executive Director
Brownsville Community Health Center
Brownsvile, Texas

Robert Knox
Deputy Director
Environmental Equity Division
Environmental Protection Agency

Congressional Members:

Honorable Nydia Velazquez, D-NY

Honorable Lucille Roybal-Allard, D-CA

Honorable Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, R-FL

Honorable Esteban Torres, D-CA

Moderator: The purpose of this session, or of this discussion, is to examine the concerns of the Latino communities regarding the environment, public policy affecting the environment, with an eye towards developing new policy alternatives for the Latino communities.

And, for this purpose, we have a distinguished panel of experts. There, on the end of the table, we have Dr. Robert Bullard. He's a professor of sociology in the African-American Studies Department of the University of California in Los Angeles. Dr. Bullard has studied environmental racism for 14 years, and he argues that polluters have taken advantage of the politics and economics of the disadvantaged and of the minority communities to dispose of their waste.

We also have Mr. Richard Moore. He's a co-chair of the Southwest Network for Environmental and

Economic Justice. Mr. Moore brings to the discussion a solid overview of communities across the country which have become active in environmental issues.

We also have Mr. Robert Knox. He's a deputy director of the Environmental Equity Division at the Environmental Protection Agency.

To his left is Rafael Metzger. He's the Director of Special Initiatives for the National Coalition of Hispanic Health and Human Service Organizations. Mr. Metzger has followed environmental justice legislation and policy initiatives at both federal and local level.

To his left is Honorable Lucille Roybal-Allard of the 56th District of California.

We also have Honorable Nydia Velazquez of the 12th District of New York, Honorable Ileana Ros-Lehtinen of the 18th District of Florida.

And, we have Paula Gomez, who is the Executive Director of the Brownsville Community Health Center. Ms. Gomez was among the first health professionals to recognize and track the high incidents of an encephalid and encephala of the U.S. Mexico area of Brownsville, Texas, and Matamoros, Mexico. Whereas the link between this illness and the environment is, at best, unclear, Ms. Gomez can articulate the circumstances by which a community becomes involved in environmental issues.

So we're going to get started. And the question here is if we assume that most of the communities come to the environmental debate having organized around a specific issue, a specific problem, then the question is how can we address long-term solutions and policy initiatives for these problems. So, if we could start with, maybe, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen.

61.2 percent of Hispanics have never heard of radon, compared to 55.5 of Asian-Pacific Islanders, 49 percent of Blacks, 45 percent of American Indians and 21 percent of Whites.

Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen: Thank you, thank you, Gustav. I'm going to just be very brief, because in these next four minutes, you're going to be hearing from the three members of congress here today. Because, if you heard all that commotion, all those bells, it means that we have a vote on, so we're going to talk very briefly. Then move on I'm afraid.

Para mi, un placer estar aqui como todos ustedes cantando para hablando y junto que estan importante que ese como podemos encontrar mas al comunidad espana en la protecion del mediamente.

I think up to now it's been thought of as a concern for other populations, and we really have not, as a community, done enough to make everyone else aware that we are as concerned with the protection of our environment as everyone else.

This is not an issue which knows either racial boundaries, or ethnic boundaries, or political boundaries. It concerns us all, because all of us are worried about protection of our natural resources and making sure that those resources will be available for the next generation.

So, I have been trying to work in my local community, which is only the area that we can impact, in trying to have a more of a discussion between what has been thought of as the traditional anglo-type issue of the protection of the environment with getting more input from the Hispanic sectors, whether they're Cuban, Nicaraguan, Puerto Ricans. Those are mainly the populations when we speak of Hispanic in my area. So that's been a big issue for me, and this is meeting in that direction. Muchas gracias. Thank you.

This is not an issue which knows either racial boundaries, or ethnic boundaries, or political boundaries. It concerns us all, because all of us are worried about protection of our natural resources and making sure that those resources will be available for the next generation.

Congresswoman Velazquez: I'm going to go and vote and I' going to come back, you know, this is a very important issue for me and for my community, and I would like to spend some more, you know, some more time on it, if it's okay.

Moderator: And maybe we can follow with Mr. Rafael Metzger.

Mr. Metzger: Okay. I'm going to — my name is Rafael Metzger from the National Coalition of Hispanic Health and Human Services Organizations.

We were founded about 20 years ago to focus on mental health concerns of the Hispanic community. In the late seventies, our mission expanded to include health care, generally, and cover all the various health issues that are affecting the Hispanic community.

There are three things that are unique about COSSMHO. First, is that we do not accept funding from alcohol or tobacco companies or their subsidiaries, for obvious reasons, both because it's a health issue, and, also because, now, as we have been, as we have seen, with the EPA's recent ruling on environmental tobacco smoke, it's also an environmental health issue.

The second thing is that all of our programming is community-oriented, community-based and are tied by that concept, so that at least 65 to 70 percent of all of our funding goes directly out to the communities and very little back to headquarters.

And, the third thing is that we've always represented all the Hispanics since we were founded, Cuban-Americans, Puerto Ricans, Mexican-Americans, and Central, South Americans, and the other subgroups.

I brought with me today a chart, or a set of charts, that's called Hispanics in Environmental Equities and Selected Indicators. There's some on the back table that you can grab it on your way out if you like.

I'm going to start by briefly going through some of the items on the chart. The very first chart is titled "EPA Ranking of Environmental Hazards on the Basis of Cancer Risks." What this is is the result of a landmark study that was done by EPA, published in 1987, that, where all the various experts from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and other scientific experts from the management of the environment got together to rank what they felt were the most important environmental hazards to human health in terms of how they cause cancer.

So the important thing to know about this is that it's not necessarily based on hard data that was available. Many of the items that are on here, it is based on data. But this is an experience of each environmental scientists and experts.

Number one was "radon." In radon that you —radon gas is an invisible radioactive gas that you find that comes out of the ground and after smoking collecting there. "Workers exposed to chemicals" was high or placed number one with radon.

But we really need to make sure that we focus very strongly on getting good data and making sure Hispanics are included in the studies,...

The second is "pesticide residue on food." The third is "indoor air pollutants," one of the major ones is environmental tobacco smoke. And consumers exposed to chemicals was also tied with ETS.

The fourth one is "hazardous or toxic air pollutants" generally. Fifth is "ozone depletion" and sixth is "hazardous-waste sites."

And, these are the six, what EPA specialists and scientists, felt were the most important threats to environmental health based on that 1987 report.

Later on Administrator Riley asked for a review of that report. And because a lot of the different items that they included on there were not necessarily based on data that is as robust as it could be, so, what they ended up coming up with after that, is four areas, not necessarily rank, but four areas that the EPA Science Advisory Board later, on reviewing the 1987 report, came up with. And that's ambient air pollutants, worker exposure to chemicals in industry and agriculture, pollution indoors, things like radon and environmental tobacco smoke, and pollutants in drinking water.

So these are a later version of the same type of list saying these are the four most important things as far as environmental threats to health.

Now, the next chart, you're going to see, it says Hispanics are most likely to never have heard of radon. So, we know that on the first list, radon is one of the top four items. And on the second list it's one of the top four items. On the first list, it's the first item.

61.2 percent of Hispanics have never heard of radon, compared to 55.5 of Asian-Pacific islanders, 49 percent of Blacks, 45 percent American Indians and 21 percent of Whites. So what this means is that there is a major gap among Hispanics in knowledge about radon. And that means that we need more outreach and education programs on radon so Hispanic communities can test their homes for radon and conduct the proper mitigation as needed to correct the problem with radon.

So EPA has begun to do this. And, this is one area where I think they deserve credit, because the radon division has been responsive to doing outreach to Hispanics in working with our organization to get information out to the community. But, this was started last, maybe, within the last two years, this initiative on their part.

So, it also reflects, I think, that we are lagging, as far as how the outreach is being done. We're coming last even though we're one of the most effective.

Second chart. Hispanics are among the least likely to test for radon. That chart is self-explanatory also. You can see the rates there.

One of the other areas that we saw on the first two charts that ranked the environmental health hazards, was that there are great problems that one of the biggest threats to human health are problems with the air that we're breathing.

This chart, next one, is how the percentage of persons living in areas failing to meet EPA ambient air qualities standards by race ethnicity.

The different bar graphs refer to areas where one or more standards are unmet. This first one here, two or more, three or more, four or more, etcetera. In each instance, Hispanics being represented by the black bar graph here, Hispanics are most likely to live in an area that is designated nonattainment by EPA for various pollutants. And, they rank these pollutants, I mean, types of pollutants they are talking about are things like particulant matter, ozone, carbon monoxide.

The chart after that talks about particulate matter specifically. 34 percent of Hispanics live in areas of particulate matter compared to 16.5 of Blacks and 14.7 of non-Hispanic whites.

The chart after that talks about elevated levels of lead. This is another air contaminant that was referred to in one of the first two charts. Again, Hispanics, almost 20 percent of Hispanics live in areas with elevated levels of lead compared to 9.2 for Blacks and six percent for Whites.

On the area — in the area of ozone, about 70 percent, 71 percent, of Hispanics live in areas that are nonattainmnet areas for ozone. For Blacks, this is — I don't have an exact number but from the bar it looks like it's about 65 percent — so, Blacks and Hispanics are doing pretty poorly when it comes to ozone and non-Hispanic Whites are running at about 55 percent.

I think there's only one or two more charts here. Yeah, the last one is carbon monoxide and —from cars — Blacks and Hispanics, about 85 percent that are living in nonattainment areas for carbon monoxide, 50 percent of non-Hispanic whites.

Now, the point of going through all this data should not be taken to mean that we have good data on the environmental health status of Hispanics when it comes to environmental threats to health. The critical issue that we have to deal with, I think, as a community in dealing with these kinds of things, because there are also other agents out there, toxic waste sites, uncontrolled hazardous waste sites, that we need to deal with as well.

But, we really need to make sure that we focus very strongly on getting good data and making sure Hispanics are included in the studies, that EPA does, on what are the problems that are affecting us and from an environmental point of view.

One example. EPA, under Riley, not too long ago, I guess less, just over nine, ten months ago, when Riley was in there, had formed a working group to go over environmental equity issues within the agency. This was an internal working group that the agency had called together as experts from within the agency to decide, to see, what it is are the things that are going on, as far as environmental equity and agency. And how can we, what can we do to improve that.

That — they issued an important policy statement which called for the EPA to assess risk which is a very, very important thing. This needs to be done. But it only called for it to be done by race and income. They left out ethnicity. And, this is a big factor, exclusion of Hispanics. And, so, this is an area where Hispanics, Hispanic women, they should need to be working more with the process to make sure that we're included. But EPA also needs to be sensitive to the fact that we need to be included in the study.

Another example is a farm-worker study which is being conducted, or being started now, by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. They are starting a $15 million ten-year study on the epidemiological study on the health of farmers and families and other workers who apply agriculture pesticides.

The study omits Hispanics entirely. Hispanics are — 71 percent of Hispanics are —seasonal agricultural workers are Hispanics, at least 71 percent. If you add the migrant farm workers, it's probably even higher, running at 80. And Hispanics are omitted from this study. I mean this is an incredible thing.

Focus, the study is going to focus largely on non-Hispanic Whites, and I think it's in North Carolina. And in some sense they're going to include Blacks and Native American. And Blacks are also a proportion of the farm-worker population of the United States. But this study omits Hispanics, and it's incredible that this is being done.

They say they're doing a follow-up study next year, and that is more difficult to collect data for Hispanics. But, given who the farm-worker population is, we should be first on that list as far as priority to study.

The EPA National Health Exposure Assessment Survey. This is a big survey that has been under —been planned — by EPA for quite some time now. Now it's included in some of the environmental equity legislation that's pending before Congress.

Incredibly, up until about eight months to a year ago, Hispanics were — I can pause if you want —Hispanics were not going to be included in this study. The study was going to focus on, or only collect data, broken out by Black and White subjects. Since that time, we have been able to get EPA to move from "we're only going to do it on Blacks and Whites" and then accessed us to saying "we're going to include Hispanic, identify our subjects to migratory strains, or a cost benefit analysis."

So we're still working with them on that. But this enhances that is being planned by them should include an Hispanic identifier. There's no question about that. If it's included, if the legislation is passed that includes and accesses something that needs to be done by the EPA, that legislation specifies that they also must collect data by ethnicity, and we would thereby be included.

But, this is another thing, I'm told, of how we need to become more involved in the process, and EPA also needs to be more sensitive to including us in their internal processes that they go through. A lot of how these things are developed are not very transparent, and that makes it difficult for people to monitor.

I think I've ran over my time so, I could talk some more, but I'll stop right now.

Moderator: Thank you very much. We have Robert Knox from the EPA that might want to add something. But, before, I would like to welcome Congressman Esteban Torres of the 34th District of California.

Mr. Knox: Thank you very much.

Thank you very much. On behalf of the Environmental Protection Agency, our administrator Carl Browner, I want to thank the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute for inviting me today to participate in the 1993 Issues Conference.

Recently, Administrator Browner said that, and I quote, "I believe that the Government has the responsibility to insure a clean, safe environment for every American, every community. Everyone is entitled to clean air, pure water and healthy food. Every child has the right to play outside without being exposed to toxic contaminants. That's what everybody expects, and that's what every American has a right to expect."

Everyone is entitled to clean air, pure water and healthy food. Every child has the right to play outside without being exposed to toxic contaminants. That's what everybody expects, and that's what every American has a right to expect.

In the past, the Environmental Protection Agency has been criticized for failing to recognize or to regress the injustices that too often are manifested in environmental policy. They find a course to criticize the agency again in the future.

However, we believe that you will see substantial real world progress in the EPA in the very near future. We're listening to the communities; we're cooperating hand in hand with low income communities and people of color. And we're taking action across the board to build justice within these communities. A simple justice we're talking about, justice that people can understand, and EPA as a policy, then, and EPA as a progress.

I'm going to mention just a few of the actions that were taken to strengthen the principles of environmental justice of IPTA. Just last week, EPA held a special meeting in North Carolina to discuss environmental equities in the communities, issues in the super

fund program. It was beamed by satellite to 20 different communities around the country, and EPA is intent on including local communities in national debate on super funds.

EPA has begun to recognize the cultural bias intrinsic in some of our studies, that link health risks and pesticides and diet.

We're soliciting their ideas on how to amend the laws to enhance community involvement, and, most importantly, we're empowering communities so that they can anticipate what's going on in their own back yard.

In short, in the months ahead, changes will occur in the super programs, and you will see several good examples of how the agency intends to regress environmental justice issues.

You can also see in the President's Executive Order, on environmental justice, since the President's Earth Day Speech in April when he articulated his commitment to environmental justice. EPA has been working with the Department of Justice and other agencies to fuse the principles throughout the Federal Government.

When the Executive Order is signed, it will require all federal agencies to review their current and past environmental practices and develop a strategy for amending them if necessary to reduce injustice.

For example, we also have been working with a formable outreach program, and, as formable outreach ideas, to seek comments from native Americans and Alaskan native government communities. There are organizations to try and to regard getting them involved in the super fund and getting comments from them as to super fund reauthorization.

A series of face-to-face meetings with native Alaskans and Indians that are represented to be called a corporate country starting today describes, with EPA, certain grants, super fund grants, and memorandums of the agreements that we've made with these tribes that will be especially sorted out.

And the attendance will be open to any representative of American Indians or Alaskan native communities. Meetings will be jointly hosted by the Indian and Alaskan native organizations and a representative of EPA and the Department of Interior. There's going to be about seven different meetings taking place around the country. They're going to be in Oklahoma; Albuquerque; Green Bay, Wisconsin; Phoenix, Arizona; Seattle, Washington; and Fairbanks, Alaska.

Another example of our concern for environmental justice is the recent proposal to reform our pesticide laws. The agency intends to improve the safety of our food supply and better protect the people. Usually, low income people of color who work in the fields and in porches are — to be straightforward about what we're doing in the area of pesticides and have a single strong culture-based standard.

Also, we intend to replace dangerous pesticides with safer substitutes. And finally we're going to reduce overall pesticide use and better protection of both consumer as well as our field workers.

EPA has begun to recognize the cultural bias, intrinsic in some of our studies, that link health risks and pesticides and diet. The agency will correct this. We can no longer issue — assume, pardon me —assume that people of economic backgrounds and income levels eat the same kinds and same amounts of food. We can no longer assume that they all are exposed or approximately at the same risk. They're not.

Justice dictates that we take this sort of thing into account. We take into account the cultural, the ethnic, and the income, related variations that eating habits when we set a pesticide tolerance of the food.

Fish consumption is a good example. Currently, our criteria for the toxic contamination in fish is based on how much fish the average American eats over a lifetime. Yet, some people, low income people and people of color and Asian communities, or Native Americans, for example, may eat much more than the average American; and, thus, they may face a mentionably higher environmental risk.

The agency is examining changes in the way we set criteria or standards for fish consumption. But, we believe that we must respect, not only the average person, but all people, in our rich and diverse nation.

So, the other issues that we're working on, currently, for instance, we're doing with the safety, the state governments that are — that with a four and a half million dollar study of the incidence of cancer along the lower Mississippi River. This study will collect demographic and socio-economic data to help determine toxic exposure, experience-wise, in low income communities and communities of color.

Together with several other federal health agencies the Environmental Protection Agency is planning to hold a national symposium on health research and needs. This is going to be held early next year in February.

The goal of the symposium is to set an agenda of health research involving regress, past and present, in inequities and injustices. The agency's also beginning to use tough enforcement of laws to support environmental justice.

For example, just recently, the agency got an injunction with the Department of Justice, followed a civil complaint against Sherwin Williams, and, recently, a greater part of our symposium today involved penalties against several other large companies.

And, basically, and the idea here is to better protect these communities that are most at risk. The Office of Environmental Justice has undertaken a number of special projects in the environmental justice areas. We're starting a Hispanic radio program that many of our people will be sponsoring with an agency [which] could start a Latino-study group in the Environmental Protection Agency. And who also have developed a national Hispanic coordinator within their Office of Environmental Justice.

And, finally, we — the agency is working on a project you're probably familiar with along the Texas Colonias. The purpose of the Texas Colonias project is to develop an integrated and coordinated approach to implementing financial and technical assistance for drinking water and waste water infrastructures in Colonias along the Texas-Mexico border. This is a $696 million project

that the agency has started.

And there are a number of different areas that we're also working on at EPA and in our Office of Environmental Justice which we'll get to later as the panel discussion goes on. Thank you very much.

Moderator: Thank you very much. We're going to proceed with the Honorable Nydia Velazquez of the 12th District of New York.

Congresswoman Velazquez: Thank you. Good afternoon, dear colleagues and distinguished panelists, friends. We are here today to address an issue of utmost importance for the Latino community, environmental justice.

The quincentennial anniversary of the discovery of the western hemisphere also marks the anniversary of the period of intensified and unsustainable human and environmental exploitation.

In the last ten years, we have seen the linking of this phenomenon through a national environmental movement rooted in minority communities around the nation. As a Latina, serving in the House of Representatives, I have seen the environmental degradation of minority communities in my very own district.

We have a responsibility to move quickly and personably to define an inclusive environmental lesson that empowers all communities. Let me just share with you an experience that I had in New York City. Thank God we are having elections this coming November. And all the political analysts in New York are saying that the Latino-Puerto Rican vote will be the deciding factor in this outcoming election.

So I have two monumentous problems in my district. One is an incinerator that will be — will start to be built in 1996 and also a sludge plant.

So, I telephoned the mayor of the City of New York, and I requested to meet with him. And I made it very clear to him, that unless he stopped the sludge plant, it would be very difficult for me to come forward in supporting him.

Well, we don't have the sludge plant in my district. It's all about political empowerment, community empowerment, and political clout.

Our issues and problems vary from community to community. To fight environmental injustices, we should find a common denominator. To serve our constituencies well, we should go beyond the jurisdictional boundaries of our districts to address the full scope of environmental problems and create environmental solutions that are sustainable and full.

In order to fight environmental injustice effectively, minority communities must focus on the disease, not on specific symptoms. Most importantly, the drive for environmental justice should articulate a vision of community control and participation in environmental decision making.

This task is not an easy one. But I am confident that our communities are more than capable of reaching our goals. We should start by promoting multi-cultural and environmental educational programs in our communities. We should seek to build our communities' capacity for utilizing right-to-know laws and increase all our interactions with business and regulators.

Educational programs that emphasize the sanctity of different cultures and the value of diversity must also be a crucial element in achieving environmental justice.

Environmental education can also have immediate results. High school and junior high students can be mobilized at the front line of defense against lead poisoning and asthma.

Children of all ages can also be a probable course for preservation if they are taught the importance of, and proper techniques for, the recycling, energy and conservation. We must also utilize a tremendous economic potential and clean-up of existence of contamination.

We can work together in our districts to reclaim and restore our communities with damaged plant, air, and water resources. A policy of restoration holds tremendous potential for generating economic growth. As we move away from the cold war, we can shift feelings of color in media psychology to education, innovation, and, finally, labor and production, necessary to restore present dump sites.

As a Latina, serving in the House of Representatives, I have seen the environmental degradation of minority communities in my very own district.

Community reconstruction should include the restoration of our cities' housing projects, making them free of asbestos and lead paint. Investment in new housing can also be designed as an investment in community employment. We should work to provide funding for asbestos and lead paint removal which provides training and skills to local workers. Workers could become a powerful tool for community-wide development and education.

Finally, we must consider legislative solutions to the environmental problems of our communities and the nation as a whole.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate a member of the Hispanic Caucus, Mr. Bill Richardson, for his leadership in this issue, and the legislation we have presented on pollution prevention and incineration control.

That measure, that I co-sponsor, will establish new permit standards from municipal solid waste and hazardous solid waste incinerators and require that no waste facility would be located within 1.5 miles of a school, hospital, church, mosque, prison, or drinking water source.

The bill also requires that applicants demonstrate that expansion, and new construction will not disproportionally impact low income and minority communities. We should also support the elevation of the Environmental Protection Agency to come in its latest status. We should support specific provision to ensure proper orientation to environmental justice concerns. The environmental justice movement should work together to establish laws for nondiscriminatory compliance with all environmental health and safety laws in our community and insure equal protection of the public health.

All levels of government are responsible for allowing

this type of discrimination to occur. We need to develop community empowerment to implement public policy. It is clear that all our communities and individuals are entitled to a safe and healthy environment so let's us proceed with our movement. Thank you.

Moderator: The Honorable Lucille Roybal-Allard of the 56th District of California.

Congresswoman Roybal-Allard: Thank you very much. And let me apologize ahead of time for having to leave, because I'm due in a markup with Congresswoman Velazquez in just a few minutes.

I come from a community that is very familiar with environmental racism. It is a community in which almost every major freeway in Los Angeles passes. It's a neighborhood which has been plagued by unwanted projects. We have fought the building of the first commercial hazardous waste incinerator in an urban area that was going to be built in this Latino community.

We have fought, and we — I have won on all these issues, a treatment facility, hazardous treatment facility that was going to be built a thousand feet from one of our schools. And we continue to fight these projects. And I just wanted to make just about three or four points before I have to leave.

And, that is that I think we as Latinos have to make it very, very clear that the Latino community and people of color are not new to the environmental movement, that we have been a part of this environmental movement for generation after generation. But it has always fallen on deaf ears.

Our Latino brothers and sisters, who have worked in the fields, have been fighting pesticides long before I was born and perhaps many of you here. So this is not a new issue. And let's not fall into the trap of letting the non-Latino and non-people of color intimidate us by making us think that we are jumping on board on something that they have started.

Most importantly, the drive for environmental justice should articulate a vision of community control and participation in environmental decision making.

The reality is the reason they have started and have taken this movement is because all of the things that we have complained about for years, the pollution, the freeway, the contamination, the garbage, has finally caught up to their neighborhood and is affecting their children. And that's why they have justized to this environmental movement. So we had started it many years before they did.

The second point is that as we are dealing with how to solve this problem, that we need to make it clear that the way to resolve it is through equity, by everybody sharing in the solution.

And that those of us who lives in poor minority communities are not going to fall for the argument that "Well, you know, you live in an industrial area, and you have these poor communities. These treatment plants are better suited for your community than in Beverly Hills," especially when the research shows that those who generate most of the waste are the affluent people in this country, not the poor minority country who have to share in the burdens of taking care of their waste.

So, if we are truly going to deal with environmental racism, our government agencies have to look at equity and the way these treatment facilities, all these things that we need to have, because the reality is we do have waste that has to be dealt with. But, that it is done equitably, and everybody, all communities, share in the establishment of these facilities.

The third thing is that as we work together, the only way that we are going to win, as Latinos, as minority communities, is that we need bring in other communities to help us. We need to have other organizations to support us. We can't just do it alone.

But, the one thing that we need to be careful of, is that when people come in to help us in our communities, that they come in as allies and not saviours, if they come in to help us and to support us and not just tell us how to do that.

And, I may just quickly give you an example of what I'm talking about, because the project that I mentioned, especially the hazardous waste incinerator, which had gotten a negative declaration which means that it didn't meet an environmental impact report. It did not at the state level; it did not hear from the EPA and federal level. Brand new, new technology, never been tested, and everybody said, "Oh, no problem. You can build it in East Los Angeles."

We had a hearing and one of the major environmental organizations came to this hearing to support us. Well, here we are. Some mothers in East Los Angeles had organized to fight a lot of these negative projects and we come into the community. We conduct ourselves, you know, with a lot of dignity in our community.

And here comes this organization dressed as chickens, and birds, and really disrupted the hearing. Well, the mothers of East Los Angeles and others in our community were absolutely appalled by it. And, so, it was necessary for myself, in this case, because it was in my district, to call them into my office and tell them that this was not acceptable. If they wanted to help us, they had to help us in the terms put down by our community.

So we need to make sure that we continue to do that, that they come in to support us as allies, but not as saviours or taking over how they are to conduct themselves or how we are to conduct ourselves in our community.

And the final message that I want to leave with you is that it is possible to win. And, one of the things that happens is, and I experienced this in my district, was when we began to fight these projects, all of which we won, some took six, seven years, one took 12 years, going all the way through the state courts.

And every imaginable thing was done to prevent us from winning — we ultimately won — we need to empower our communities and let them know that it is possible to win. That it doesn't matter that they are poor. It doesn't matter that they are Latino or a people of color. That if we organize, if we work together,

that we can — and increase our numbers that it is possible to win.

And, you can view examples not only in my own district, but in northern California where another poor community was just successful in defeating another incinerator.

And we need to help these people to understand the process. How to testify before a hearing and try to get the resources and bring community leaders and others to — rent a bus so they can attend these hearings.

Believe me, every trick in the book has been used and will continue to be used to keep Latinos and poor people from going and testifying at hearings, whether they print messages, you know, on the tenth page of the third section of the paper, to putting notices where most people don't see them. We need to make sure that we use whatever resources we have, and we let people know what is happening.

There's this tremendous fear in our communities about "Well, gee, we, you know, don't know what to do or say or," they're just uncomfortable with the system. But, if we help them, if we work with them, if we teach them how they go before the committee, how to testify, we can be very, very successful.

And I just wanted you — one example of what I mean about everything in the book. We had a hearing. They put it in a building that would only accommodate about 200 people. We organized and had 350, so they had to cancel the hearing. And so we demanded that there be another hearing set. So they — this was the State Department of Health Services — thought they were going to be real cute so they said, "Fine, we'll do it."

So what they did was they put the hearing miles from the community. And, they had it all day, from, like, about ten in the morning till about ten at night. So what we did was, I got the word out, told them, "Don't go. We will all show up at seven o'clock when everybody is out of work." We got some businesses to donate buses and so — and they had this huge auditorium — but we showed up with over a thousand people. And the Department of Health Services sat there from ten in the morning till seven o'clock at night looking at themselves.

So we need to do those kinds of things to get our message across that we're not going to let them intimidate us, that we are going to be there to win the fight. And, the way we're going to do it is by empowering our community, teaching them the process, encouraging them and helping them understand the importance of citizenship, the importance of registering and voting, because as Congresswoman Velazquez said, that's where our power is. We have got the numbers. And, now, we've got to change those numbers into political power, so that we will be heard, and we will no longer be ignored or be an afterthought.

And, so, thank you very much, and I have to run.

Moderator: We'll continue with Esteban Torres from California.

Congressman Torres: Thank you very much. Let me get up here, because I want to use a chart.

Thank you very much for being here today. I see some many familiar faces that I've known before and some new faces. It's good to have a crowd here listening to the kinds of issues that, although I was late, I also was able to learn some points.

We need to develop community empowerment to implement public policy. It is clear that all our communities and individuals are entitled to a safe and healthy environment...

We've heard a lot today about environmental justice as I came into the room. We hear of any — we hear much in our time about environmental equity. The African-American community, particular, has been actively involved in educating their communities, their people, about environmental equity.

In our community, as Congresswoman Roybal pointed out, we too have been immensely involved, perhaps not to the degree that some of us may be able to measure. But we know that one of our leading advocates in the community, across the country, the late Cesar Chavez, certainly talked at great length about toxicities and the impact on humans and workers because of pesticides and toxicants in the fields.

The problems that are identified as environmental equity issues, specifically relate to the fair distribution of the quality of life. Or, in other words, some communities of people, specifically minority communities, who are often subjected to a disproportionate amount of pollution. I want to underscore those words, disproportionate amount of pollution.

The problem is that it's easy to claim something. You can always do that, like a decision to site a new hazardous waste facility or a municipal waste incinerator as Nydia Velazquez pointed out. Or even how to regulate a particular facility, which has been racially motivated.

But, it's more complicated than that, ladies and gentlemen. I believe that most environmental decisions are driven by economics, plain and simple. Unfortunately, many people of color live in economically depressed communities. It's a fact of life. We know that. And, all too often, all too often, without the necessary political influence or the political empowerment that is so necessary to partake in those decisions that I've just mentioned.

It takes a Nydia Velazquez and the case of Congresswoman Roybal are exceptions, and perhaps exceptions to the rule. Let me just state to you that Los Angeles is an excellent case in point. I was happy to see Lucille Roybal explain to you her own trials and tribulations in trying to deal with the issue in the Los Angeles area.

Clearly, all of you, who know Los Angeles, all of you know that it is a culturally and ethnic diverse community. And, often the division between ethnic groups is obvious, very obvious. And, as the world saw in the L.A. riots, the County, the County of Los Angeles is strong and clearly divided along racial and economic grounds.

But, at other times, ladies and gentlemen, the division is even more subtle. And I maintain even more

insidious. Most of the facilities in Los Angeles which release toxicants into the air, into the water, into the land, are located predominantly in minority communities.

Now, while this observation in itself is not surprising, let me show you to some extent, the concentration of these facilities. And, this is why I brought this map here of Los Angeles County, the largest County in the world. If Los Angeles County were a nation, given its wealth, given its gross national product, if you will, would be the 11th largest nation in the world, L.A. County alone.

But, here's a map of L.A. County which shows the location of the dominant racial and ethnic groups. If you will just follow the chart, the green is the Asian communities and where they're located, the Black communities in the blue, and the Hispanic community in the more violet or purple tone there. The White or non-Hispanic community is indicated by the light yellow, so that you see where the minority communities are located in Los Angeles County.

Our Latino brothers and sisters who have worked in the fields, have been fighting pesticides long before I was born and perhaps many of you here. So this is not a new issue.

You can probably see that this is our harbor area down here, and this is the central city, part of the San Fernando Valley, the San Gabriel Valley, moving more towards the Pomona Valley. This is the central city. This is south central Los Angeles.

Again, you can see by the key tones there where the particular ethnic communities are located. And, if you will notice, disbursed through those communities are a series of black dots if you can see them. You can see some separate ones in the non-Hispanic areas.

Those black dots denote the toxin centers in Los Angeles County, that is to say, landfills. Those are incinerators. Those are areas where toxins are buried, or stored, or just simply dumped.

So the map states, as I said, the case, that in a place like Los Angeles, a modern community, the minority communities are susceptible, of course, to the particular dangers of toxicity.

The information shown on this map confirms what many people already suspected. Nevertheless, isn't this information somewhat startling, just to look at?

And I think it speaks to the issue of intolerance again. The fact that those communities, for so many years, have not had political empowerment to deal with the issue that's before you. It is only of late, with the emergence of the Congresswomen that were here, in my case, Lucille Roybal, in my case, in the San Gabriel Valley, in Matthew Martinez's area, and Xavier Becerras, that we eventually are beginning to get some federal legislators.

We now have state legislators that are very much on top of the issue. And, at this question of empowerment is going to have to deal with eradication, the shifting, the demise of these facilities.

And, as they said to you earlier, "We can do it. We simply can do it through the power of the ballot by making sure that we have voters and that we're vocal at the places of government where they will listen to our concerns."

Now, this astounding data could be more attributable to simple market economics. Minorities make up the largest segment of the poor in America. Poor people live in depressed areas. Most individual and industrial facilities are located in the less desirable parts of town; therefore, most polluting facilities are located in our minority communities.

However, beyond the direct correlation of minority communities, with the majority of polluting facilities, we must address the issue of how society treats environmental crimes. In September 21 of 1992, the issue of the "National Law Journal" it was reported that pollution penalties, in predominantly White communities in the United States are 500 percent higher than pollution fines in non-White communities. 500 times higher in non — minority communities than in minority communities.

Additionally, when comparing low incomes, White communities with low income, non-White communities, the economically-depressed White communities were still likely to generate quite significantly higher than middle class minority communities for the same environmental violations.

This is more than just environmental inequity. This is environmental racism, plain and simple. That's what it is. A distinction that is fueled and defined by conscious practices and policies as you see on this map before you.

I say this because we have to be careful how we use the labels, like environmental racism, because they can become overused, and will come to mean just simply nothing. The issue of environmental equity, or environmental racism, is just beginning to be understood in the United States, a greater degree of it in Indian reservations, along our Mexican border, especially in the states of Texas, Arizona, where the Colonias abound, and you find situations like this.

And, across the border in Mexico, this has become the great issue of NAFTA, whether, in fact, if we have a NAFTA, you know. What happens to the pollution degradation that takes place along the northern Mexican border where Americans go to dump, where American producers dump, where American producers at Maquiladores steal out their poisons and toxins into the rivers and into the landfills and pollute the smoke of the atmosphere.

I think this has important lessons and applications to the rest of the world. And you surely have heard about our attempts to take our poisons, our toxins, our waste to other parts of the world, because we can't accept them here in our own country. Try to induce third world nations to take our waste and toxins.

You've all heard about the floating garbage ship that floated around. I don't know. It left New York and went around the Horn somewhere, and it ended somewhere, tried to dump in various countries in the Pacific and the Caribbean. Nobody would take it, and it ended up back in New Jersey again.

So I appreciate the efforts of the Caucus in attempting to educate our members about this very important

issue of our time. And I believe that the phenomena has several root causes, and we must understand its causes and origins before we begin to adopt mechanisms to combat this environmental racism.

The environmental movement in the United States has been predominantly White, middle class, and educated. The U.S. movement concentrated initially on issues like the Endangered Species Act, which didn't seem to affect the lives of our people.

As Congresswoman Roybal stated, our community, our minority communities, our activists, understandably have been involved, either directly or indirectly, in trying to improve the standard of living for the members of our communities, whether they were farm workers, or they were inner-youth persons.

Most community workers didn't see that the environmental birds and bees, or chickens and birds group that she talked about, had any relationship with our lives. She told them, right? "You're going to have to come in here and lead us and work with us. Take off the funny suits. We mean business."

These attitudes should have changed a long time ago when we realized the direct connection between human help and the help of our planet. But our vision has been short-sighted. Our prejudices have been too deeply ingrained, and our immediate and obvious problem has been too pressing.

There are numerable, numerous proposals that have been introduced to address the abundant environmental problems facing the world. It's critical that in analyzing these proposals, we take into consideration, not only how these proposals reduce the environmental extremities in the most effective and efficient manner, but also how these proposals will affect the minority communities in our own nation and again throughout the world.

Environmental equity must become a cornerstone of the basic approach that we have applied in environmental problem solving. And, I think we ought to define the basic approach as the three "E's," I always say, the three "E's" of the environmental problem-solving formula. And, that's the externalities, the efficiency, and the equity. Equity, that's the most important word. We cannot make the global environment better by simply transferring the burdens or making it somebody else's problem.

And, I simply want to close today's comments by telling you that I again, I believe that equity needs to take a seat at the table of all of our environmental deliberations. Remember, it's easy to claim environmental racism. But it's too hard, it's just simply too hard, to find solutions to these problems.

And, so, we need to begin to look at, as we've been doing as legislators, on ground water clean up. Drinking water, drinking water is going to become a problem of our future. Just think about it. As more and more contamination is seeping into our aquifers and the water you drink, you may take it for granted at the tap that it's clean, when, in fact, it may not be.

It's an issue we have to look at as we downsize our military, as we abandon bases, as we leave fuel-equipment sites, or fuel facilities. Lead paints in old buildings, in our old communities, all of this, ladies and gentlemen, is an issue that we have to address ourselves to in the environment. You, as political activists, as opinion-makers, as representatives. It is an issue of empowerment and only you and us working together can we give solution to it. Thank you very much.

Moderator: We're talking about environmental equity or environmental racism. We have Dr. Bullard, who has been studying this issue for about 14 years. Dr. Bullard.

Dr. Bullard: Thank you very much. If we look at the issue of environmental justice, and I prefer justice to equity, language is very important. Language, equity in many cases implies equally sharing the poison, shifting the poison from one community and balancing out. Justice implies fairness and elimination of all poisons at all breadths.

...we need to help these people to understand how the process works. How to testify before a hearing and try to get the resources and bring community leaders and others to rent a bus so they can attend these hearings.

Environmental racism is real. It is not imagined. It is not in the head of activists or admonitions. It's so real that some of us are actually getting published in this area.

The book, Confronting Environmental Racism, Voices from the Grassroots, are stories told directly from the point of view of people who are impacted, who have empowered themselves. Government cannot empower anybody. The interest in California sociologists cannot empower anybody, only groups that pool themselves together, organize themselves into fighting forces, such as the network in the southwest, The Gulfport Centers Organization in the south, and the Indigenous Environmental Network, Native Americans, Latino-Americans, African-Americans, Asian-Americans, working together, confronting environmental racism.

And environmental racism is defined as any environmental policy, practice, directive that differentially impacts, intentionally or unintentionally, individuals, groups, communities, based on race or color.

Environmental racism combines with public policy and industry practices to provide benefits for Whites while shifting costs to the people of color. Environmental racism is reinforced by government, the legal, economic, political, and military institutions. We're not talking isolated cases. We're talking about an institutional, structural condition that disenfranchises people of color and low income people.

Environmental racism is real. We cannot reduce the phenomena of district impact, disproportionate, negative effects to class alone. Racism combines to disenfranchise affluent, middle income and poor people of color. We are a racially and ethnically segregated society. We have American apartheid today.

If we look at residential segregation, residential segregation can influence where people live, where they work, the education that they receive, the quality of the health care, access to health care. In this country

today, urban areas, big cities are segregated along the racial, ethnic and economic lines.

Environmental quality and justice are inseparable. We cannot move the whole issue into "this is an EPA problem; this is a problem that only the Department of Energy can deal with." Federal, state, and local entities must address the phenomena of some communities are not created equal.

If you happen to live in a lower income, working class, community of color, whether it's in the west, the south, north or east, or along the border, there's a good chance that your community does not receive the same level of protection if that person lived in the suburbs. There are very few toxic waste dumps, incinerators, lead smelters, grain elevators, sewer-treatment plants in Beverly Hills, very few.

If we look at the engine that is driving the environmental justice movement and that is forcing government to take action, it is not industry. It is not the head of the EPA. It is not agencies, themselves. It is basically grassroots organizations that have basically demanded justice and drawn a line in the dirt, and said, "We will not be poisoned; our children, three generations, second generation, and today, will not be poisoned."

So I think we have to take note of the history. How did we get to where we are in having executive orders being talked about, Environmental Justice Act, being talked about in Congress.

In talking about the history of civil rights in this country and looking at the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title Six, saying that no federal monies can be used in to by government, whether it be state, federal, whatever, to discriminate, to differentially enforce laws that create inequities.

I believe that most environmental decisions are driven by economics, plain and simple. Unfortunately, many people of color live in economically depressed communities.

So, we have the federal EPA, for example, providing monies to states, delegating responsibility to society issues, permitting all kinds of state regulations, that unequally protect people of color, that differentially force compliance, if it happened to be in a White area, or it happened to be in a community of color. We say that is discrimination. We say that is illegal. It is unethical, and it should be stopped.

We've fought an executive order that sets the stage for ending this unequal protection and discrimination and dual system of justice. We want the executive order. But we also wanted legislative remedy, in that something cannot be wiped off if we get a new president that comes in and say "What is this environmental justice stuff?"

We want it mandated. We want legislation. We want the current laws that are on the books enforced, equally, across the board. Those communities that are at greatest risk, whether it be communities along the U.S.-Mexican border in Loquiles (phonetic) or whether it be communities in California.

Example, Calumet City in the Central Valley, farm-work community, 95 percent Latino, 40 percent do not speak English. Their community in Calumet City already impacted by their jobs. They work in farm work, as farm workers. They're impacted in their homes, because they are close to the largest hazardous waste landfill, west of the Mississippi River, — .

Now, they were asked some while back to host an incinerator. The people said "no." We're also saying that risk, the current science that is used to analyze and assess risk underprotect some communities. Even EPA now knows that having certain standards, based on averages, average fish consumer. Who is the average fish consumer in terms of average when you factor it into a formula? White male, 160 pounds, five-foot-ten, blue eyes, blonde hair, eats "X" quantity of fish.

Now, we know that underprotects somebody who lives in the deep south, where catfish is a delicacy. Someone who lives in California, happens to be Asian, who eats the entire fish. Fish is a consistent diet. Middle America, in the midwest, Great Lakes, we understand this, so cultural, regional, racial, and ethnic differences must be accounted for when we calculate our figures in our formula.

We're not talking about preferential people. We're talking about equal protection. We're talking about environmental rights, not privileged. We're not talking about just because you have money, you can vote with your feet, and leave behind the poisons in the Bronx, south central L.A., east L.A., southside side of Chicago, West Dallas. We're not talking about that. We're talking about having those communities receive the same level of protection as a White, middle class, suburban community of homeowners.

Now, the environmental justice movement has forced the federal agencies to look at this issue. We haven't got them to come around a hundred percent, but they're 80 percent along the way.

The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, Agency for Toxic Substance Disease, Substance Disease Registry, Environmental Protection Agency, National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, NIOSH, National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, Department of Energy, these federal agencies have now planned a national conference to set up research agenda to address environmental injustices. They've come a long way. They're now saying they're going to set a research agenda to address the environmental health inequities, injustices.

And, what the environmental justice movement has forced to the table is that in order to talk about addressing the inequities, you must bring into the planning process, the disenfranchised communities. The representatives of individuals who have basically been working to get this issue pushed to the forefront.

We have redefined what health research is. It's education; it's training; it's outreach; it's prevention; it's intervention; it's all of these things. It's more than a group of research scientists sitting in a lab defining

how they are going to spend $40 million over the next fiscal year. It's more than that.

We say homosocial reproduction must end.

Homosocial reproduction is nothing more than a small homogenous group of White men sitting in a room defining policies as to how to create little small groups that look like them and think like them and end up developing policies that directly affect them in a positive way.

We say that must end. And it must end at every level. We're finding that this process is now trickling down into states. It is not by accident that those states that have passed laws, environmental justice laws, are in the deep south. It is not by accident that because of Jim Crow, and because of differential enforcement of laws, in many cases based on race, based on ethnicity, and based on class, you're finding that the movement is now saying we need legislation. We don't need good-faith effort.

So, the states like Arkansas, Louisiana, Virginia have passed laws, current laws that are being bills that are now pending in North Carolina, South Carolina. The State of Texas just completed environmental justice/equity/racism task force on looking at what are Texas laws and the impact on people of color.

What I'm saying is that the environmental justice movement, the grassroots movement, is now beginning to trickle up into the highest level. And now beginning to trickle up into national environmental organizations. But the leadership is still at the grassroots. The leadership is still among people of color who are basically pushing this movement forward and will continue to be.

We will always need to have an NAACP. We will always need to have MALDEF. We will always need to have our organizations in our communities. We will need to have those organizations, and we will need to have cooperation, alliance building. But we never have to submerge our own autonomy and independence and friends of our organizations because of principles.

And, finally, the first national people of color environmental conference that was held in Washington, D.C., not that far from here, 1991 in October, galvanized this movement. People of color from all over this country, including Puerto Rico, Alaska, Hawaii, and that's all the way to the Marshall Islands, developed 17 principles of environmental justice that is now being used all over the world.

And we were in Rio in June '92. Those principles were translated into Spanish and Portuguese. They were translated into, at least, a dozen languages. And they're being used. And, the principles are based on justice, economic justice and environmental justice, for all. Thank you.

Moderator: Next we have Richard Moore. He's a key national leader of the environmental justice movement with over 25 years experience as a community activist and organizer. Richard Moore.

Mr. Moore: I want to actually begin by thanking the Hispanic Caucus Institute for beginning to create a dialogue amongst the Latino leadership, and I think, in a very true principle and honest sense.

I want to make a few brief comments in this short period time, to try to bring us up on some issues I think that are of vital importance, not only to other people of color communities throughout this country, but very specifically in this case, to Latino communities throughout the southwest and throughout this country.

It's very important, I think, for us to understand, and, as the Congressman earlier stated, that environmental issues is nothing new to the Latino community.

For example, for many years, many of you and many of us that have been involved in tenants' organizing, tenants' rights issues, you may remember that for quite a long time, even including, at this time, at this period of time, that we fought against lead-based paint issues, particularly in housing projects and other communities where many our residents are living.

Minorities make up the largest segment of the poor in America. Poor people live in depressed areas. Most individual and industrial facilities are located in the less desirable parts of town; therefore, most polluting facilities are located in our minority communities.

You may know that over 900,000 housing units today, primarily housing projects, are still, as we're here today, painted with lead-base paint. And, many of those children, as we sit here, are eating the chips from those walls from that paint and are being impacted by that.

But, also, in the tenants' rights movement, we must realize that we did not perceive lead poisoning in housing projects with lead-base paint as an environmental issue.

As many of the Congress people that spoke before us, that spoke in terms of the area of pesticides in farmer worker issues, for many years, not recently, in fact, we have been involved in supporting the United Farm Workers, the Arizona Farm Workers, the Texas Farm Workers, the Farm Labor Organizing Committee and many other farm labor organizations, around the issues of pesticides.

But, we must remind ourselves that we did not view, and still in many cases today, do not view the issue of pesticide as an environmental issue. We perceive that as a farm-labor issue.

We also may remind ourselves as elected officials, as communities, as leaders in community organizations, as community activists, and so on, that we have been fighting against, for many years, the intentional siting of landfills, the intentional siting of dog food companies, of slaughter houses, and we could go and on and on with the kind of facilities that are located in Latino communities throughout the southwest and throughout this country.

But, we did not perceive these issues as environmental issues. We perceived them as poverty issues. We perceived them as issues of social, racial, and economic justice. And we could go on and on with the kind of examples. As you noted, many of our communities, not only in the southwest, but throughout this country, are located close to railroad tracks. So, in fact,

then, our communities have been impacted, not only by the accidents that many of those trains have coming through our communities, spills of chemicals. Our communities have had to been uprooted and so on. And, again, we did not perceive those issues as environmental issues, but, in fact, we perceived them as issues of racial, social, and economic justice.

The environmental movement in the United States has been predominantly White, middle class and educated. The U.S. movement concentrated initially on issues like the Endangered Species Act, which didn't seem to affect the lives of our people.

And, I must tell you that, again, that environmental issues is not a recent trend in our communities. Racism is not a recent trend in our communities. We know it impacts us in housing, in jobs, and education, and many of the other issues that many of us are involved in.

But, I must tell you that it is important for us, as elected officials and leaders in Latino organizations, to understand that the movement for racial and social economic justice is not a recent trend either. That the issue of environmental injustice is an issue of civil rights, of human rights, of sexism, of racism, and the many other illnesses that our communities are impacted through throughout this long period of time.

So, in fact, then, in reality, environmental issues are not new to our communities. Nor, did we, in fact, as we went through the many issues that impact our community, see them as environmental issues. In fact, the mainstream environmental organization, as I recorrect myself, as several people before me have said, not mainstream, but national environmental organizations have not seen our issues of importance to them at the same time.

And, I must tell you that fishing is not, in the primary, a recreation sport to us. We have fun. It's nice to get away from the city. It's nice in some cases to get our families out to the lakes and to the streams. But, also, we fish to put food on our plate. And, so, then, it's not just a recreational sport for us. It's an issue of economic justice and that we need to be able to put food on the table for our families and so on.

So, I say with all of that in mind, that it is important for us as elected officials in particular to take — to understand that there's been a need developed in the Latino communities throughout the southwest and throughout the United States. And Puerto Rico must be very clearly mentioned in this situation too.

Pharmaceutical companies located in Puerto Rico have done an incredible disastrous job to many of the villages and cities throughout the island of Puerto Rico. As you know, in Midfallen, California, where many of our children are born without legs, without fingers, and without arms, it's not by accident in Midfallen, California, that today the Midfallen community of farm workers is still built on a pesticide dump, as we're sitting here testifying in front of you today.

And, West Dallas it was mentioned, one of the largest lead contamination cases in the United States, not by accident, happened to an American-Latino. In fact, still today, as we sit here, the Environmental Protection Agency, still, in fact, has not done a major job in terms of cleaning up the West Dallas community.

So we could go on and on. Whether it's Phoenix, whether it's Tucson, whether it's the 60,000 people in Latino communities in the city of Tucson that have been poisoned by drinking contaminated water, we could go on and on with the kind of examples that our communities have been impacted by.

But, instead of continuing to do that, I would prefer just for a moment for us to shift some thought here. Many times under a new administration, or whatever that may be, we have been asked, in fact, to give us time. And, as we've stated many times, it's only been 500 years so far.

So, yes, maybe, we do have time on our side to a large extent. And many of us do perceive our communities as the endangered communities. And, many of us perceive ourselves as an endangered people, because not only have we been poisoned in the community, but we're being poisoned in our work places throughout this country, by high-tech industry, by agriculture, by municipal, whether it's county, city, state governments, by landfills, by incinerators, whether it's the incinerator in — , New Mexico, that was located 200 yards from an all-Mexican elementary school.

Do, we, in fact, believe in reality that that would have been permitted any other place in this country today? Whether we talk about east L.A. or wherever that may be, that the kind of examples that we're talking about would be permitted in any other community, besides our communities.

So, in fact, then, in reality, when we look at policy and we look at regulations, and when we see in reality that even good regulations and policies today are not being enforced in our communities, in Latino communities, are not being enforced in African-American communities and other communities.

When we begin to see the kind of realities that we live in and the kind of issue that moves us forward, then, very clearly we should understand, that if they had been dumping for as many years as they have, in our community, then, in fact, when communities are being cleaned up in this country, then, where, in fact, then, is the rest of the stuff going to be dumped at?

Very clearly for us we know it's Asia, Africa, and Central and Latin America. It's now a most recent trend in Mexico with children being born without brains up and down the border, when, in fact, we were told it was just Matamoros. And, in fact, we know it's Tijuana, it's Juarez, it's Nogales, and it's in most border communities that children are being born without brains today. And, Houston, Texas, and other communities, we know that also.

So, I just would like to, if I can, close with several thoughts in mind. One, under recent developments, we've heard, on the part of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, I must tell you, that we have been

in negotiations, as Dr. Bullard has stated, with the U.S. EPA for the last several years now, I think.

But I have to say something to you in a honest sense. We would only ask the question, why, why have over nine senior staff people been appointed to the Environmental Protection Agency, and not one of those individuals is a Latina or Latino? We only have to ask that question. We cannot find qualified Latinos to fill these positions? What seems to be the problem?

In fact, as we go on and on and on, we continue to talk about all the Latinos that have been appointed to these positions, we must have to take a real look at this in reality. That is only a small percent of what we're talking about, and that we have a lot of work to do.

So, I come with you in the spirit of cooperation, of collaboration and partnership, that on behalf of the Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice, and on many affiliate organizations, over 71 organizations, brothers and sisters. Over half of those organizations are Latino organizations. It wasn't a recent development.

In fact, youth, student, labor, and community-based organizations working on environmental justice issues that have bound together in the southwest to make some difference in our community, because we will no longer continue to allow the kind of misjustice that's taken place in our community.

We have bound ourselves together, as Dr. Bullard has stated, with others now throughout the country. And, for the first time, in this city of Washington, D.C., next week, three of the major national networks will come together here for the first time to spend several days together discussing in dialogue and building relationships, those of the Southern Organizing Committee, the Indigenous Environmental Network, and the Southwest Network for Environmental Economic Justice.

Again, in closing, I thank you all for allowing us the opportunity, or myself, to speak before you today and say that we're not here begging. We're asking for justice.

And, as we ask for justice, we can't consider NAFTA a just issue. I have to tell you that, brothers and sisters. I have to say that I can't leave here without saying that. That NAFTA is not just; it's unjust. When we don't participate in the democratic process, then it's an unjust process, and none of us have participated in NAFTA under the previous administration or of this administration. So thank you very much for allowing me to have that opportunity.

Moderator: We'll proceed with Paula Gomez. She's the Executive Director of the Brownsville Community Health Center. As I said before, she's one of the first health professionals to recognize the high rate of encephala. That's a birth defect where children are born without brains or without part of their brains.

Ms. Gomez: Gracias. I won't bore you for too long, because I have a plane to catch so that's good news.

If I would just start by telling you a couple of stories, actually, three stories and get you to think. These stories are sort of disjointed, but, in the end, they're really together.

I had an opportunity and privilege to have dinner once with our illustrious Bishop, El Senor Obispo, John Jacobs Patrick. Some of you would know him from the immigration days where he was responsible for casos caro negro. He's a brilliant man and a wonderful soul.

In the course of dinner with this group of very fancy individuals, most of them women, who were passing stories, and bargains that they had bought, the Bishop said — you know, I have to back up and tell you I live in Brownsville and the border is, like, two minutes away from where we were in Brownsville — and he said, "Isn't it interesting how Christian we are. It's wonderful when we go across, and we get wonderful bargains.

But, isn't it terrible, that these same people come across, and they go to our schools, and they bother us in drug stores and grocery stores. And they leave their money and go back."

The second is a story of immigration as well. How many of you have had the pleasure of being handcuffed by a border patrolman? Show of hands, anybody? Nadie. Hey, there's one. Well, there's two of us in this room.

I can tell you what it feels like to have a little man in green with holster and gun come into your office and take out his handcuffs and take over. And whisk you away in a green, little car and the stares that you get and so on. I won't tell you what happened, because I don't want to bore you with the story.

But, I'll go on to the third story. And the third story is one of rabies. I got a call about three years ago from a gentleman that I do business with. And, I say do business, because I'm in the business of health care, health care delivered to the poor and migrants in the area. But we also have a sister community in Matamoros. And we've developed a relationship with a Hospital Timarejo, which is a general hospital in Matamoros.

And, occasionally, they run into trouble. Well, this particular phone call was from the director of the hospital. And he desperately needed a vial of rabies vaccine.

Now, we're a federally-funded program and we have access to a few things, among those rabies vaccine, which is life-giving. The red tape that I had to go through and eight hours later we were able to sneak a vial of vaccine so that the lady would not die in Matamoros. I had to sign my life away on several forms saying that we were going to use it in the U.S., so that everyone could be happy.

But all of this to say that it's great and wonderful to have people here and talk about regulations and equity and justice. But, the reality is that it is non-existent. It is non-existent, not even in the minds of those that are the policy makers, because they don't understand what it takes to carry on business on a daily basis.

And environmental racism is defined as any environmental policy, practice, directive that differentially impacts, intentionally or unintentionally, individuals, groups, communities based on race or color.

Now, I was asked to talk about what happened and how we got involved with encephaly. Just an update. We had another encephalic child yesterday and three more spina bifidas. And that's just to say that the problem is alive and well.

The scientists are saying that by October 10th, or, at least by October 13th, we should have an update on what the scientific findings are, whether it's genetics or nutrition or a combination. Or it's ambient air.

Now, most of us are feeling, most of us that live there, are feeling that it's pretty clear. That it's the environment that's the cause. But we'll see what the scientists say.

We got involved, because we noticed that one of our own patients had been born with an encephalic problem. And, shortly, thereafter, within 32 hours, three more had been born. That is a phenomenon. You know, you expect some in a population of 10,000, something like three to five, with statistics for Hispanics is virtually unknown. So this was a major finding for scientists.

It's interesting when you see scientists come to your area, and they don't really understand what you're about. And, they impose this questionnaire that's clearly made for people that live in Atlanta, Georgia, and they expect you to transfer it to a Hispanic community in Brownsville, Texas.

And, you ask the question of "Well, did you translate this thing into Spanish?" And, they said, "Yes." And then you say, "Well, do you have copy of that translation?" And they say, "Oh, no, we had someone translating it." And so you say, "Well, then, if it seems like there might be some flaws in that. Because you can translate something and then it may be uniform. But, if you're interpreting, that's a different story."

It was interesting to note that a certain nutritionist from the CDC argued back and forth that the problem was a lack of folic acid and that the federal government would fix that, that they would impose on bread that there would be additional folic acid. There would be no taste to the bread, so there would be no difference, and people would be clearly supplied with enough folic acid.

If you happen to live in a lower income, working class, community of color...there's a good chance that your community does not receive the same level of protection [of] that person [who] lived in the suburbs.

At the same time, there was a major drug company that decided to gift us with thousands and thousands of bottles of folic acid. You know, when I spoke to the nutritionist, I said, "You know, that's great that you're going to fortify our bread, but we eat tortillas."

It's that kind of mentality that is going to be doomed for failure in our particular case. Our former medical director used to describe us as occupied Mexico, and I think he's right.

You know, Henry Cisneros earlier said that south Texas includes San Antonio, and I have to differ with him. South Texas begins at the border station where the little green men start, a hundred and twenty miles north of Brownsville.

So, when we talk about NAFTA and what it's going to do to us, well, let me tell you what federal rules will do to us. I guess it's true we had no input. Yes, it's true that there's maquilas and have been maquilas setting up for the last 15 or 20 years. And, yes, there's a movement from the union standpoint to stop and you have to kill it once and for all and I've said — I've read a few reports on that. But what's going to happen along the border is we're going to have another Germany.

If the government stops this, the message is going to be clearly given to Mexico. It's going to be "You don't count. We don't trust you. There's no way to resolve this." And it has nothing to do with what's been talked about on this end. Okay?

So what are the solutions? Well, for starters, I would like for someone who can, and I don't know who the power should be, to just grant us permission to make long distance calls to Matamoros. Because, as the policy stands, we're federally-funded, and we're not allowed to make those phone calls.

Let me give you an example. When we were in the frenzy of starting the collaboration with Mexico to get the numbers on encephaly in Matamoros, I was told I had to call the Office of International Health in Washington, D.C., to get permission to call Matamoros. So, I called Washington, D.C., and 16 phone calls later, I was told, "Gee, you know, I don't know how to break that rule. Perhaps, what you should do is call Paco in El Paso and let them call Matamoros for you."

Now, guys, I don't know if you've ever lived on the border. But I live two minutes from Matamoros, and I'll be dammed if I'm going to call El Paso to call Matamoros for me. I'd rather take a leave of absence, and go to Matamoros and talk to the people myself. Which is, primarily, the way we do business.

Now, if those kinds of things continue, we're never going to solve anything. And let me tell you something else. The people in Washington, D.C., cannot tell us how to eradicate T.B. on the border. They cannot tell us how to talk to the people in Matamoros about taking care of their health problems, because they don't understand them.

And, what's even worse, is, we haven't been asked how to do that either. And we might be able to help. I'll entertain questions if you like.

Moderator: Yes, we're going to open the mike for questions, so I would like you to first state your name and where you're coming from before you ask your question.

Mr. Cavillos: My name is Jose Cavillos, Mayor of Watsonville, California. I'm really glad to hear everything that's been said this afternoon.

That issue of, that we're speaking here, is very close to where I'm coming from. Because in Watsonville, we're surrounded by a culture. We live in a county, Santa Cruz County, which is a county that passed a measure, Measure J, which was an outgrowth measure. A county that has 250,000 people, and Watsonville has

We're talking about having those communities receive the same level of protection as a White, middle class, suburban community of homeowners.

35,000 people: 62 percent is Latino-Mexicano.

We face the problems of pesticide, because we're surrounded by a culture. The one biggest issue that has come up before is the issue of land. Where we have a city that has overgrown, has no place to go and the environmental community, in my county, which Santa Cruz is known for that, has done two things.

One, because of the protection of the land and also of low growth, the price of housings has gone up. So, the affordability of housing for that, for the worker, especially here we're talking about immigrant worker and field worker, agriculture worker, compared to the wages they were making, it's unbelievable.

So one problem. No housing, no land to grow. The environmental community becomes very strong in protecting the land, protecting the environment, protecting the slues, protecting the low growth.

I ask you, and I ask the panel, that's one of the biggest debate going on right now in our county. Here's a city that has grown 2.8 in the last ten years. Just on last year, we grew 1.5 of it. We're in the process of developing our general plan for the year two thousand five.

And that that issue comes from Sierra Club and for that environmental community, we should not go into any agriculture land, we should not go any place where there's wetlands, and we should not go any place where it is closer to the sea.

So, I ask you how do we deal with that question?

Dr. Bullard: As a former urban planner and as a housing specialist dealing with primarily with housing discrimination of residential segregation and land use, it's very easy to understand how the slow growth, no growth, and in some cases, exclusionary zoning mechanisms have had regressive impacts on providing decent, safe, sanitary, and affordable housing.

And, in many cases, these mechanisms have actually exacerbated existing problems in terms of inequities, and I think we have to address the environmentalists when they talk about no growth, slow growth. Nobody's advocating building in a wetland, but we have to talk about expansion of housing in areas that will, in some cases, go against the grain.

You know, the same environmentalists who talk about let's protect the wetlands will have nothing to say about let's protect people who are homeless. Let's protect people who have inadequate housing.

So I think we have to have one set of rules. And the way you get the one set of rules is following the principles of environmental and economic justice.

Mr. Metzger: I was just going to add to that, that that complaint, that you're talking about, mirrors one of the big issues that's going on in the international environmental field where a lot of more developed countries are now looking to less developed countries and now are looking at environmental issues in the international context and trying — and now wanting to impose a lot of different rules and regulations on the types of things that are pointing to the air or the types of uses land record is purpose to. And the opinion of some of the lesser developed countries is that "you guys have gone and done your development and you have made yourself a developed first world power, and now you are telling us that we cannot do the same, because of these environmental issues."

So, and that has been the response of a lot of these countries. And so what they've been asking for is saying if that's what you want and you want to protect the environment then you also have to help us develop.

And so building on what Professor Bullard said, it seems that in your particular case, the best thing is to go back to the Sierra Club and say "Fine. You want to protect the land. So do we. How are you going to help us solve this housing problem?" But that's just one problem on that.

Mr. Protulis: My name is Steve Protulis. I work for the AFL-CIO, the labor unions. And I'm sorry to see that Paula Gomez has to leave, but I know you have to catch a plane so good luck, have a safe trip.

Ms. Gomez: Thank you very much.

Mr. Protulis: There is an issue that, I guess, was raised by Richard Moore, and that is the issue of NAFTA. But, what I'd like to do as an issue dealing with the environment, is ask you a question, as we debate this issue in America for the first time. This issue is a curse and a blessing at the same time, because in the north part of this country, there is a myth about Mexico. And, for the first time, some people are addressing that issue because of job loss.

...we did not view, and still in many cases today, do not view the issue of pesticide as an environmental issue. We perceive that as a farm-labor issue.

I spent most of my life in 25 years in Michigan, where I was Chairman of the GM plant with 8,000 workers. I was invited to go across the border to see a sister plant that was built in 1981, where mostly job that I had and my sisters and brothers lost. They were performing decent work with children 14, 15 years old doing it.

And I also witnessed the environmental destruction of the community in that area. And my question to the Hispanics that we deal every day, is not so much about is NAFTA right or wrong, is the conscience of the community of the Mexican government in allowing that destruction of the area where economic needs was never addressed during the time the Maquiladora plants were built.

And, the people suffer the consequences of having children born without brains, or without arms and legs. And, yes, spill over to this side of the country. So, one of the things that we need to do, I think, in this room, is try to face the accountability and the punishment to corporations that have done this.

Let's face it. When we have brothers and sisters

looking for work in lines, sometimes two miles long for 200 jobs, you try to tell them that it's going to be environmental dangers for you to go to that factory when they have to feed their family.

...in reality that even good regulations and policies today are not being enforced in our communities...

So we need to talk about economic justice, about corporations that they only looking for profits. And I think basically that's the area I think we need to address today. That we really have somehow have corporation totally miss the importance of being important citizens, but yet responsible for the community. How they leave the community when they move for cheaper labor, and how they move along just going from one place to the other strictly for one purpose is for profits.

And, I'd like to say to you, in finale, this. We and the congressional caucus members, we're so proud of the congressional delegation that established this dialogue with you, because this is the best way for us to learn from you and you to learn from us.

And I know this is the beginning of many years to come. And, I promise you, Richard, from our point of view from the labor movement, we will see to it that somebody puts enough pressure to this organization in charge, I'm talking about this administration, so that we will have a Latino in there working with you. And we will put on pressure on the labor movement to see that happens. And you communicate with us and make sure that happens. Thank you very much.

Moderator: Richard, you would like to add something.

Mr. Moore: Yes, I just would like to if I can. Thank you very much for the comment. Just for a second, attempt to try to understand this issue, and we're going to do it in five seconds. And we know what it's going to be.

As you know, there was a recent announcement that there's a possibility that there will be an office opened in the Environmental Protection Agency on the Mexican border.

And, discussions with Administrator Browner, we've expressed our opinion that, not because the NAFTA, should there be an EPA office open on the border, but, because there's a problem on the border, there should be an EPA office open.

Now, our children are being held hostage, are being held hostage, and in many instances, we're being told that if we do not support NAFTA, that in fact the opening of the Environmental Protection Agency office on the border is under question. If that is not holding my children under hostage, then we quite don't know what it is.

Another point for clarification if we may, please. In the negotiations of NAFTA, if I may, the people in the largest numbers that are being poisoned inside many of those facilities and in the Colonias, that the pipes are dashing out of, behind those facilities, have never been to the table of negotiation. And, from our opinion, it's primarily women, single women, head of the household. And that if we're going to negotiate anything, then those, in fact, are being impacted the most, need to be present at that table.

And, finally, if I may, that there's also several other elements connected to the workers and to the community aspect of this. Where has the Native American community been, please? Has there been Native American representation in the discussions over NAFTA? From those of us that come from border communities, we know, in fact, that native nations are located, in many cases, on both sides of the border.

So, then, in fact, then, in reality it's not just the Latino question. It's a question; it's an indigenous question. It's an African-American question. It's an Asian Pacific Islander question. It's a worker's question. It's a religious question. And we can go on and on with those particular points.

In ending I just say that the importance of this particular issue, and please not allow any of us to hold anything under hostage, in fact, in terms of us negotiating our rightful deserve at any table in this country, and, particularly, on the table of discussing the issue of NAFTA.

Ms. Castillo: Good afternoon. My name is Bianca Castillo. I'm from Los Angeles, and I think I'm honored to have listened to and not have a mission, a researcher, an activist, an administrator, on the issue of environmental equality.

I want to hear just a brief comment from each one of you with regards to how do we educate our community, how do we cultivate, how do we sponsor with vision, our youth, our students in graduate programs, so they will be prepared to lead and to influence policy in five years? And, I mean influence policy, right, you know, up there at the top with EPA. So I'd like to hear from you folks.

Dr. Bullard: I think environmental education must start in elementary school. It must start early. And I think that environmental education must be broadened from the context of education is basically everything. It's where, irregardless of where we live, where we work, where we play. So I think we have to have a realistic reform in our curriculum at elementary school, high school, at college level.

And, I think we have to, basically, start to reemphasize science, math, and so that when we start talking about getting, and increasing the pool of scientists of color, that we can talk about getting people in these policy positions at EPA, DOE, and other places that understand what it's like to come from a community where you have a lead smelter, a toxic waste dump or whatever, and understand that you just can't do the science without having, bringing in the equitable issues of what it means to just send out a request or proposal to store our nuclear waste and end up getting 16 out of 21 proposals from Native American graduates, and understanding that there's some things that go into forcing people to accept something other people don't want.

And a lot of that has to do with economics. I think we have to train, educate, and we have to inform people, and that's about, you know, I call it education for liberation. The government is not going to liberate

anybody. That's how we have to obtain the curriculum.

Mr. Knox: The Environmental Protection Agency has been working on this issue for sometime. We've got a number of programs to address students who are in — starting at the junior high school. In Washington, D.C., for example, we have adopted a school program with 35 junior high schools and been working that program about four years. Very successful program. We had the students, at the summertime, work at EPA and intern, and real jobs and not a xerox copier or things like that. We have them working on computers. We have them working on specific programs.

We also have academic relations programs with a number of colleges, universities around the country. This year, for example, we had intern programs in the summer EPA where we had 150 students of color who worked in intern positions, in our laboratories, in our offices, in our regional offices, and our headquarters offices.

Our cause and relation program primarily focused at students of color, where we actually will have professionals at EPA that go to the universities, give lectures.

And we have exchange programs, that are with universities, where universities will send their professors to EPA. We have two in our office who are working currently at one of the projects in the Office of Environmental Equity: one from the University of Indiana, and another one from Howard University, who are actually on IPA assignments, EPA. They are on sabbaticals at their organizations. They work on IPA, at EPA, working in our office.

So we've had a number of programs like this. I think one of the major efforts is to try to get historically Black colleges and other minority institutions actually having educational programs in environmental science and environmental engineering.

We're currently trying to establish programs like that. One of the areas we're pushing is the "adopt a community," where a minority and community of color can be adopted by a local university. We're going to place grants with colleges and universities so that they can be discretional, technical eyes and ears in the community. They can teach the community how to monitor industries in their communities.

We think all these areas together will just make for a better educated and powerful community.

Mr. Metzger: Just briefly, you're absolutely right that we need to have people working on this in the next five to ten years where we have Hispanics in the policy-making positions at EPA, and we have Hispanics in the major environmental organizations. And we don't yet. That's exactly it.

And a lot of the programs that Mr. Knox mentioned are very, very good programs that can do a lot to help. The problem with that is, with all due respect, is that we have a very difficult time monitoring them to see what the participation in those programs is in terms of the demographics, what the breakout is by non-Hispanic White, non-Hispanic Native American, Asian American.

So, that, while these are excellent programs, Latino or Hispanic participation in them, we have no way of finding out what that is. There may be ways to find out. That data may be available, but it's very difficult to get. So monitoring of those kinds of things is very important.

Right now, we don't know, okay, so I can't say for sure. But I'd be willing to bet that Hispanics are sorely unrepresented in those kind of special internship programs, which are very good, because they take students from colleges and put them in real jobs in EPA and expose them to policy-making experience.

That's why, and that's related to the ratios, I was talking about earlier which is data and why the issue of data collection is so important. When you use terms like minority, or people of color, Hispanics tend to get lost in the shuffle, okay? And that's — and this is so — these terminology issues, this is why it's so important in the policies that they put out, that they mention it immensely, and that the word "Hispanic" is used.

But, in answer to your question, yes. In COSSMHO, incidentally, also have some environmental education programs that we're developing for community-based organizations in Texas, and, I think, it's New York.

We also have, right now, an active radon education project which is an important environmental issue.

Mr. Pardo: My name is Jose Pardo, and I'm an attorney in, essentially, my emphasis was in environmental law. And my background is in housing and economic development. And, Professor Bullard, I can appreciate, I guess, you, understanding about zoning works in exacting the rezoning of housing and the effects of air pollution and other particle, pollutants and water pollutants that housing is located near, along with Mr. Moore.

One thing that I just wanted to say is that it's been pretty interesting for me to hear that EPA feels that they're not qualified as mechanics in the fields. Positions in the environmental movement, in essentially my background, having been in architecture and economic development, gave me a sort of insight based on my having served as a council person in a small town as to how zoning affects the lives of people.

We got involved because we noticed that one of our patients had been born with an encephalic problem. And shortly thereafter, within 32 hours, three more had been born. That was a phenomenon.

And, so, consequently, I decided I'm going to get a law degree. And it's going to be in environmental law. And what amuses me about the EPA response towards Hispanics is that three years ago when I applied for a position here, nothing came out of it. And my resume may still be floating here.

And the reason that I'm here is not to, you know, pursue a job at this juncture, because I suspect that they felt that there's a lacking. You're more suited to work in the field of housing, because I see that the environmental movement is essentially a non-minority movement, and it is pursued with fever by those involved in it.

As you can see with all the organizations that have taken up the environmental movement, it reminds me

of 25 years ago of civil rights and the fever with which people involved in civil rights pursued that area of injustice.

And they were comprised of non-minority people and minority people. But I just see that the environmental movement has failed to pick up the other component of our society. I mean I would urge those of you who are as unspoken as you are, Professor Bullard, Mr. Moore, and the rest of you to keep pressing people in these positions, such as the EPA administrator to make them look harder, because Latins have been in this country long enough to go and play the game. Go through the hoops as Professor Bullard, you have gone through.

You know, get the right degrees and then be there so you can say "I've done what is required of me in our society. Now, can I go to bat?"

And, Mr. Moore, I think that I commend your efforts to make sure that those who can emphasize we've gone through a background. You know, being immigrants here or being in a minority status in this society, will be reviewed when appointments are being made, and jobs are being filled, because I do not believe that the EPA argument washes out and regards us all who qualify.

The people in Washington, DC cannot tell us how to eradicate T.B. on the border. They cannot tell us how to talk to the people in Matamoros about taking care of their health problems, because they don't understand them.

I can assure you that I know that there are Latins and there are Blacks that are qualified in the environmental arena. They just have not been incorporated at this moment.

Mr. Moore: I just want to add just one point if I could to that comment, just to remind, the EPA and understand that the brother, here, has a little bit of an awkward situation, but there was also a list of names that were gathered last year, at the end of last year, and was submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency of Latinos and other people of color that could fill some of those positions.

We have the honor in Mexico, for example, of Secretary of the Environment, Judy Espinozo, who is one of our finest community activists. And that she's done a terrific job in the State of New Mexico in terms of helping to move a positive environmental economic agenda forward. But I have to say we can't even take the excuse that she didn't have a list, because we provided her with it.

And, then, came the call that we gave the list, but we don't have the resumes. We said, "We provided the resumes." So, we got more of a complication and we encourage all of you here to please contact Administrator Browner and remind her of the need for not only Latinos and Latinas to be hired in any Environmental Protection Agency, but also other people of color.

Mr. de Jesus: My name is Aycar de Jesus. I'm with the — and Textile Workers Union in the New York, New Jersey area.

A question. Let me provide you this schedule that I'm undergoing right now. So, there's a textile dye house in upstate New York, of which this textile mill has — there's fumes coming out of it, and toxic waste and it has been fined by the EPA.

And, the company is fact-related, indebted and all this. The work force at this factory is Mexican-American, Puerto Ricans, African-Americans and real poor Whites in the Newburg area of New York.

And, so, the company now spends the next five years trying to repay and have some, like a schedule planned, of minimum requirements to fix this factory up in response to EPA.

I walk in as a newly representative of the workers at this place, and I go inside the factory. I mean they've been fined, and they have to be forced to fix the factory for the community, right?

I walk in, and the workers could just, you know, figure out when their lives are going to be cut short, because if the environment outside is getting polluted, you could imagine how the workers are inside who are dealing with the dyes and all the chemicals.

EPA fines it. OSHA hasn't visited it. The Occupational Health and Safety Administrator hasn't even visited it. The point that I'm trying to get at is the following. I'm not an indigent, but I plead ignorance on this question.

I'm not aware if there is a working relationship between folks in the environmental movement and folks in the labor movement that perceive a lot of these issues of health and safety in the environment from the standpoint of insuring implementation of occupational health and safety, you know, on rules and regulations.

So is there a working relationship? Is it weak? Is it strong? I've got a perception that it's very weak, if nonexistent. But I don't know. I really don't know.

Labor is pushing for OSHA reform, whereby, it would be great and to bring in democracy to the work place, if OSHA was reformed in such a way that it becomes war that all companies, all work places, must create health and safety committees at the work places that meets regularly, and could, you know, ensure, union or nonunion, could insure that work places are properly implementing health and safety regs, right?

So, the question is, is there, has there been, or is there projected to be, more of a working relationship with this. And it's becoming more and more of a real necessity, because in the same very factory and during contract negotiations, I'm hit, but the workers are hit. "We're paying half a million dollars, you know, to fix up this factory, so don't ask for no wage increase." Right? And if we have to go through EPA.

Secondly, the workers themselves are afraid. The workers are really afraid to call in OSHA, because they're afraid that OSHA may end closing the factory.

Then, third, the employer will say "Don't bother me for wages, health benefits, etcetera, if not, I'll just go to Mexico, because of NAFTA, right? So, in part, I'm showing you impact of what economic trade relations

the way it's happening, is happening on your eastern cities.

And, the question is, more so, is there a possibility of a working relationship, because it exists? And how do you have to — do you have some ideas on how that could be further expanded?

Mr. Bullard: Maybe if I address the part where I see the convergence and the working together occurring. The environmental and economic justice movement looks at labor, looks at poison in the community, looks at neighborhood, etcetera. And I think the movement to keep this separate and apart is not working. We're explaining that people are looking at OSHA; they're looking the EPA; they're looking at Health and Human Services.

...the same envirnomentalists who talk about let's protect the wetlands will have nothing to say about let's protect people who are homeless. Let's protect people who have inadequate housing.

The conference that's being planned for February of '92 is very important, because this is where we set the agenda. It's important that NIOSH is at the table with NIEHS, National Institute of Environmental Health Science, and National Institute for Occupational Safety, health and safety, is there.

Let's talk about workers, whether they be in silicone valley, which in most cases are Asia and Latino immigrants, women, or whether it be in the garment districts, sweatshops in L.A. or in New York, in many cases, Asian, Latino women immigrants. Or whether it be in chicken nugget factories in North Carolina, you know that are burned to the ground, women, in many cases, women of color. Or whether it be in the Mississippi Delta, catfish processing plant, mostly women, African-American, working at minimum wage.

So, the environmental justice movement is we're going to bring into the fold, pesticide farm worker, bring into the fold, whole issues on justice. And, justice for all workers, not just white collar workers who are concerned about radiation and emissions from terminals. That's important. But what about those people who are poisoned in the fields and when they go home, they're poisoned because all of the stuff is still in the air.

So it's happening. But it needs to occur in a global sense. And that's where I think bringing together the redefining of what this research agenda is all about, how to spend monies that's going to maximize what we're talking about.

And you have to get the federal agencies to talk to each other, because what OSHA is doing and what EPA is doing is uncoordinated. And what's going on in Health and Human Services, the Department of Labor, I mean, all of these other departments, it's not uncoordinated.

So we have to say that we need to have an overarching theme of environmental justice. That's why the Executive Order is important to go to the heart of unequal protection and justice for all, whether it's labor or whether it's in terms of communities.

Moderator: Mr. Knox.

Mr. Knox: Yes, I'm just going to add that the Executive Order will do that as Dr. Bullard's indicated. The Executive Order will also set up an interagency task force that the — administrator Browner and Attorney General Janet Reno from the — who will sit on that task force and who will bring these organizations, these agencies together in a more cooperative way.

And all the agencies will have representatives on the task force. So, the kind of issues that you're discussing, and brought up here today, will be addressed, you know, formally, at all the agencies. As far as absolutely right in the past, this has not happened, but we're hopeful that the Executive Order, that President will sign soon, hopefully, will be able to accomplish this.

Voice: May I make a comment. I think it's important to know that on its face the Executive Order is not clear with regard to either the roles or the functions or which agencies will participate in the interagency task force.

I think it's also fair to note that the environmental justice movement, activists in this movement, very early on in the Clinton Administration, through a historic transition-taker, articulated to me what a development of an interagency task force, explicit agency nominations, keep within the agency task force to do targeting, in terms of remedying the types of problems that people on this panel have been talking about.

So, while we hold out the Executive Order as a solution to a number of problems, we should also state that it is not yet clear, within the language of that order, whether occupational or the connection between occupational and environmental exposure is going to be dealt with. We're certainly hopeful that it will. We have submitted comments to that effect and, for the record, I thought I would note that.

Moderator: Any more questions? Well, we'll give you the opportunity to summarize, if you need to. Rafael Metzger, if you want.

So we need to talk about economic justice, about corporations...looking only for profits.

Mr. Metzger: Data collection, I think, is a very big issue for Hispanics because data is what drives programming, no matter what you say. It's going to be the data that ultimately drives most of the programming that EPA will do in terms of education and outreach.

And that's why we need to make sure that Hispanic identifiers are included in all the demographic and epidemiological research that EPA does. And, in addition, that they conduct proper oversampling for Hispanics so that they are valid.

The second thing is that ATSDR, this is related to the OSHA issues, that they're destroying the difference between OSHA and the functions it does, and EPA and the functions it does.

...how do we educate our community, how do we cultivate, how do we sponsor with vision our youth, our students in graduate programs, so they will be prepared to lead and to influence policy in five years?

There's another agency within U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, called the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, ATSDR. That —the legislation which authorizes or created that agency does not allow it to work with community-based groups when it's doing its educational programs to teach doctors and health professionals and others how to recognize environmental illnesses, how to recognize when a patient comes in and say "Okay, this patient has been exposed to x, y, and z either through their work place or through — because they work in a field, and they've been exposed to certain pesticides."

ASTDR has these programs that teaches the doctors, but they haven't been allowed to do it, because of legislation with community-based groups. And, for Hispanics, the community-based groups in that infrastructure is the way to get out into the community and to get the knowledge out there so that the people that are actually serving the clients. So that is a great impediment to that, data collection in those and in monitoring also of the various programs. That's my summary.

Mr. Knox: Very briefly, I think that the number of issues that has been raised today by panel members have been very helpful. I think that the community involvement is critical for community empowerment. People in the communities have to take charge of their community. They've got to be able to assist in making decisions in terms of siting issues, in terms of zoning, in terms of planning issues.

It's important, and that EPA will be working with communities, will be working, giving small grants in the near future to communities to help them organize, help them get better educated on these kinds of issues.

And, we also think that our sister program, such as pollution prevention, is an important effort to the future, that we've got to stop pollution in the first instances.

And that's one of the issues that the agency is working on, pollution prevention and recycling, resource that reduce these pollutions and reduce the amount of pollution that we create in this country. It's very important.

The agency is working with various industries. And, in order to do that, we've got a number of programs underway that have been successful so far. A number of involuntary programs, but we think that you'll see more and more of this as communities put more — show their concern, about the problems in the community, about environmental problems. And we think that pollution prevention is the answer and the answer for the future.

Mr. Moore: There's, actually, in summary, I think, several things that are very important to us. One is that elected officials and others advocate with us and not for us. I think that's very, very important.

Somewhere in the institutionalization of environmental justice, those of us in the community, have a feeling that the experts now were rushed through the door and forget that the experts are, in fact, in the communities, those that have been poisoned both in communities and the work place, need to be brought to the same table for these discussions to come to some solution. So, advocacy, advocating with us and not for us, is very important.

I think others is the interagency task force that has been spoken to. It's not just the EPA. It's DOD; it's DOE; it's HUD; it's BLM; and it's all that. The environmental justice is not a closed box, and, unfortunately, just does not belong to the Environmental Protection Agency, whether it's town and city, state or federal government, that is, in its broadest context.

Environmental racism is not accusing a chemical of being racist. It's in its broadest context. It's in regulation; it's policy. That's even limitation; it's cleanup; it's where the soul is being taken from, from one community to the next community. It enhances hiring and policies and many other kinds of things that go along with that. So, I think it's very important for us to note that.

And, I would just as closing in summary say that to those that will be in Washington on Monday, there will be an announcement by churches. Churches have gotten very active in environmental justice, because of grassroots participation in others, and on Monday there will be announcement made here in Washington of three-year initiative by churches to join hands with community organizations around the environmental justice initiative. Thank you.

Dr. Bullard: I think the environmental justice movement is a movement about participatory democracy. No one ever said democracy was easy. No one said it was not costly. We have to do it. We have to make, we have to democratize the decision-making process. Bring people back into the picture of government.

And that's what your environmental justice movement is all about. It's only fair, and, in the long run, it will mean that we will save. Save lives, save resources, and ultimately, save this planet, a just planet, in the work place, as well as in communities.

This whole movement is our family, home, community, and I think, when policy makers represent communities, in the context that community means everything. And there should be no community that is considered expendable. We need all communities; we need all neighborhoods; we need all people. Thank you.

Moderator: Mr. Bullard, Mr. Moore, Mr. Knox, Mr. Metzger, thank you very much for being here. Thank you very much for participating.

Session #3
Education

Moderator:

Cindy Pena
WJLA-TV

Friday, October 1 **PROCEEDINGS**

9:00 am - 11:30 am Rayburn House Office Building

Panel Members:

Leticia Quezada
President
Board of Education
Los Angeles Unified School District

Magdalena Lewis
Program Director of Padres a la Escuela
National Committee for Citizens in Education

Melvin Delgado
Professor of Social Work
Boston University

Hector Garza
Director, Office of Minorities in Higher Education
American Council on Education

Emilio Fox
Region Superintendent
Dade County Public Schools

Maria De Los Angels Ortiz
Vice-President for Academic Affairs
Anna G. Mendez University

Guillermo Linares
Councilman, 10th District
New York

Congressional Member:
Honorable Xavier Becerra, D-CA

Ms. Pena: I'd like to welcome you all to this session. The session will address the education of the next generation, that it must be a priority for all segments of our community; therefore, partnerships between our parents, our educators and the corporate community are all being developed to address this issue.

There are a couple of questions that we have in mind: What are the successful roles for each of the partners in this equation, and where have successful educational partnerships of this nature been developed?

I would like to introduce all of our panelists, and I think we're going to start off from the far right, and we have Leticia Quezada. She is the president of the Board of Education for the Los Angeles Unified School District. She brings a corporate school perspective to the panel, in addition to her extensive experience in community and parent initiatives.

Seated over to her left is Magdalena Lewis, who is the program director of Padres a la Escuela for the National Committee of For Citizens in Education. She has the parent and school perspectives to contribute to this issue.

And over to her left is Melvin Delgado, who is a professor of social work at Boston University. He offers the perspective that partnerships already exist naturally in our communities and that they can be developed.

And seated next to him is Hector Garza, who is the director of the Office of Minorities in Higher Education for the American Council on Education. He is an evaluation facilitator to the Ford Foundation, specifically to the Urban Partnership Program that is funded by Ford.

And Emilio Fox is from Miami, and he is the region superintendent for Dade County Public Schools there.

And we have Congressman Becerra, who's seated next to him; and seated next to Congressman Becerra is Dr. Maria De Los Angeles Ortiz. She's the vice-president for Academic Affairs for the Anna G. Mendez University System in Puerto Rico. She brings a Puerto Rican perspective from the island with a wide ranging experience in several partnerships initiatives with other universities across the country.

I'd like to welcome all of you and thank you all for joining us. What we're going to do is we're going to start off — each panelist is going to have a five-, seven-, 10-minute answer to a question that I'll be reading off in just a moment. After that, if you all will hold your questions until after everyone is finished, and then we'll open up for a nice dialogue and a nice conversation, questions that you all have for the panelists, and vice-versa.

All right. The question that we have today that we'll be discussing is this: Corporation "A," Community Group "B" and School System "C" are gathering to develop an educational partnership model that graduates Latino youths from college at rates of 25 to 40 percent. That's up from the current 2.75 percent, according to a 1991 National Council of La Raza Publication.

It is a long-term commitment, because in order for a student to graduate from high school ready to go to college, they have had to have done a good job in kindergarten. They have had to have a good experience in first grade.

From your particular topical and regional perspective, what components, especially public policy initiatives, are necessary to ensure the successful completion rate?

And I think we're going to start with Leticia Quezada.

Ms. Quezada: Good morning, everyone. It is nice to see the national forum of two days, to have two plenary sessions on education. I think that tells very much how important education is.

It's a real pleasure to be with you from Los Angeles, Los Angeles Unified School District, a great place, Los Angeles Unified School District. I say that to the benefit of our graduate of LaCresha High School who came to say good morning today. She's very proud of the fact that Los Angeles Public Schools is represented on this panel, and I'd probably say of the subject that we're dealing with this morning she's probably the greatest

example. Graduated from LaCresha High School. LaCresha High School is in the inner city of Los Angeles. Traditionally, for the past many years, it's been a black school. Today it's turning demographically; it's about 50/50.

Financial resources have to be a component of a partnership that takes place between the parent, the student, the K-12 school system, college/university network, and of the private organizations and CBOs that are involved in it.

In many schools actually in south central Los Angeles — many high schools in south central Los Angeles are experiencing that kind of change where many of our high schools that used to be black high schools in the '60s and '70s today are 75 percent, 80 percent Latino and, to the topic of the day, be--comes a real challenge, because we've been implementing minority access to higher education with an emphasis on African American students, and sometimes we're not able to change to the demographic changing populations of our students.

In looking at partnerships and particularly with a goal of graduating Latinos, not from high school, but rather from college, particularly I think what we have — the first and foremost critical factor that has to be in any thought of partnership is long-term commitment. It cannot be a commitment of for overnight. It can't be a three-year partnership program. It is a long-term commitment, because in order for a student to graduate from high school ready to go to college, they have had to have done a good job in kindergarten. They have had to have a good experience in first grade.

So we have to look at a partnership that, in fact, focuses on the success of Latino students "K" through 12, the connection between high school education and to higher education, and the support that is needed in that.

I believe that college graduation today for Latino students requires academic preparation; in other words, students being able to graduate from high school prepared academically to go to college. It absolutely for Latino students requires financial resources.

Many of the students that graduate from high school, successfully enter USC, for example, University of Southern California, 80 percent of them don't graduate, not because they're not academically prepared or not because they're not academically able to handle the work, but rather because they can't afford $25,000 that it costs to attend USC.

USC has been very good about giving Latino students a need, full scholarship for the first year. By the second year, they've lost half of that. By the third year, they've lost two-thirds. By the fourth year, they get no help. So many Latino students are dropping out in their senior year at USC, and similarly costly universities.

Financial resources have to be a component of a partnership that takes place between the parent, the student, the K-12 school system, college/university network, and of the private organizations and CBOs that are involved in it.

The third item that requires — that can't predict success in college graduation is for the student to have a definite career goal in order to withstand the many obstacles that he or she will face along the way of college graduation. If a student doesn't really know what they want to do, there will be many reasons to quit, and we don't want our kids to quit.

Not enough Latinos are graduating from high school with all of these requirements, with the financial preparation, the academic preparation, the definite career goals, and too many students, Latino students, are graduating with no plans, no preparation, and very clearly no financial support.

Successful collaboratives to address this issue would have to include K-12 school systems, a university network, corporate sponsors and community-based organization. We need to address — we need to develop a core of students in high schools throughout the country that graduate with the "A" through "F" requirements that would prepare them to go into the landmark universities of their state, the UCs, for example, or the University of Texas, for example.

We need parent support groups. We need parent support groups to prepare parents how to prepare the kids to go to college, to prepare parents to let the kids go. If a child or a young woman graduates from Los Angeles and is accepted at Harvard University, we need to prepare our parents to let them go, let them go. You'd be surprised how much training that requires.

We have to get our universities involved in our high schools, in our middle schools and in our elementary schools, to articulate the needs, to articulate the preparation that is needed in the work that the K-12 system needs to do with the university system in order to provide transition for our students from high school into college education.

The parent participation in the education of the children is of great significance. Research has demonstrated that, regardless of race, ethnic or socioeconomic background, when parents are involved, children do better in the school and go to better schools.

Particular attention has to be paid to limited-English-speaking students, who may have come into the school system at the eighth, ninth or 10th grade, who have been in a bilingual program. In California, for example, many students do not qualify for the UC because they've been in bilingual classes the whole time. They haven't been, for example, in college prep courses, and the UC does not recognize those courses.

We've been talking on a task force that I serve on for the UC system that, in fact, we need to look at releasing that barrier that exists right now for bilingual education program students, so that, in fact, their

classes could qualify for UC credit.

Corporate sponsors need to offer four-year scholarships, not one-year scholarships, four-year scholarships, because, more often than not, corporate sponsors who offer scholarships require a B+ average. More often than not, those students don't really need that first-year scholarship because, if they are good students, they, in fact, will be able to get scholarship money for that first year. Their need is going to come in the second or third and, very particularly, in the fourth year.

So my effort with companies is, in fact, to offer our students four-year scholarships, even if the dollar amount is less, but that the student can count on it for four years and not have to worry about how to go from the third year to the fourth year.

A corporate sponsor who wants to make this kind of commitment would also make a commitment for student internships during the summertime, so that the student also doesn't have to worry about how they're going to survive during the summer and how can they come back to school in September with some money in their pocket for the things that they're going to have to provide for.

Corporate sponsors would provide professional mentors and role models, particularly the minority or Latino or female mentors, that they can give some success roles and success models for the students that are going into college; and, very importantly, that corporate sponsors need to expose our students to the corporate environment, so that our students can learn what the expectations are of the corporate environment.

Community-based organizations need to provide support services to students. The ASPIRAS of the world, for example, are necessary throughout the country and in many numbers to provide not only career planning, for example, tutoring, for example, special preparation to pass the college attendance courses, et cetera, but community-based organizations could be a tremendous help in providing training for our parents and support for our parents or even just a group for parents to discuss what are the challenges for a parent who wants to see their child or their youngster go on to college.

We need to look at, for example, community-based organizations perhaps taking over the role of administering corporate scholarships. One of the things that I find with corporate sponsors is that they want to give the money, but they don't know how to select the students, one, and they really don't want to deal with how to administer the scholarships from one year to another.

Organizations like the National Hispanic Scholarship Fund provide a need for the student and for the corporation as well, and I think that's something that needs to continue.

Latino organizations, for example, community-based organizations can hold school districts, universities and corporations accountable for doing our job in making sure that our students graduate. Latino organizations can, in fact, hold school districts accountable for saying, "How many Latino students did you graduate? How many students are going on to college?" These Latino organizations can also go to the universities in California, for example, and say, "How many Latino students did you accept, and how many Latino students are you graduating?" That accountability is not happening today. That accountability, I believe, is — that role is best served by the community-based organizations.

More that anything, we must have a long-term commitment because, in fact, to graduate Latino students from college, it's going to take that long-term commitment. We must also have some measure of where did we start and how much results did our work produce. We don't have that base right now.

We have to then evaluate the programs that are successful and determine where did we fall short so that we don't make the same mistake again. But I think, more than anything, we have to be committed to the idea that, in fact, Latino students must graduate in greater numbers from colleges, and we have to enable our students to believe that, yes, they can graduate from high school; yes, they can graduate from college; and it's not a matter of whether being smart enough or deserving enough. It is a matter of developing that network of support at home, at school, in the community and, in fact, in final analysis, the financial investment in our students.

And I think through that process, in fact, and we have seen many successful models of Latino students who have received the benefit of this kind of investment, they come back to the community and say, "I was given the chance, I was given the support, and now I want to give that support back to my community."

We have an organization in Los Angeles called Youth Opportunities Foundation that is — you look at that group of students and they are like the stars of Latino students, and then they graduate from college and they come back to the Youth Opportunities Foundation wanting to contribute to the next generation of successful Latino students.

If a child or a young woman graduates from Los Angeles and is accepted at Harvard University, we need to prepare our parents to let them go, let them go. You'd be surprised how much training that requires.

We have, in fact, ways to do it. I think what we need now is a very clear commitment to doing that in greater numbers. Our need is not that we don't know how to do it, it's that we need to expand the numbers across cities and across states. Thank you very much.

Ms. Pena: Before we go on, I'd like to introduce Councilman Guillermo Linares from the 10th District, New York. He just stepped in. Thank you very much for joining us this morning.

I think what we're going to do is kind of go from one end of the table to the other end of the table; and, also, I'd like to ask the panelists to please be

brief so that we can continue on with the discussion. I know that there are a lot of people here who have many questions, and obviously this is a very interesting topic of conversation that is sure to bring upon some terrific discussion.

Corporate sponsors would provide professional mentors and role models, particularly the minority or Latino or female mentors, that they can give some success roles and success models for the students that are going into college;

So we're going to start next with Dr. Maria De Los Angeles Ortiz.

Dr. Ortiz: Good morning. First I would like to thank the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute for this exciting opportunity to be here with you and discuss the issue of educational partnerships.

I am convinced that, as we complete our transition for an information society, it is more important than ever that we understand that higher education school systems, community groups and industry must depart from their past isolation, recognize new forms of interdependence, and search jointly for innovative solutions in the future.

In order to address the challenging question that has been raised, how can we develop an educational partnership model that is successful — that will successfully increase the college graduation rate of Latino groups, I would like to briefly reflect over some conditions that, from our experience with partnerships, should be present in any successful educational partnership.

First, a successful alliance requires that each party recognize the aspirations, fears, values and goals that each one brings to the partnership. Each must comprehend the legitimate needs of the other and should bridge the differences in culture and values.

Often, relationships even between educational sectors are hierarchical and all utilitarian. The college sector offer their expertise to the "K" through 12 educators. Historically, these two sectors have been guided by very different cultures which have had little positive effects on each other.

We feel that an effective partnership should reconstruct the relationships among all segments of the education community, corporate world, and focusing on a long-term basis.

Secondly, educational partnerships require some transformation in institutional structures. This means fosterings, shared governments, and co-equal participation in decision-making, the development of a common agenda.

One of the fundamental ideas behind symbiotic school-university partnerships is that schools, universities and communities will work together on the same old problems, problems which have been worked on separately before the partnership was entered into. Partners are equal; that is, each has an equal voice, whether the problems traditionally have been embraced exclusively by one party.

This kind of jointly joining is now missing. University people are accustomed to bringing their expertise to this pool, usually as consultants. The reverse rarely has been the case. Consequently, university people have great difficulty at first in recognizing school people as equal partners and, indeed, letting them into their territory at all. School people, on the other hand, do not always trust those from the university. They often believe, rightly, that the latter are there to gather data for a paper to be published in a professional journal.

Third, state and federal government have an important role in encouraging partnership arrangements. The establishment of councils by governors, mayors, may be an important first step in encouraging different parties to sit down and discuss how each one can contribute to the economic development of their city, their region or state.

Likewise, federal government can provide incentive with reduced obstacles and increased resources to those agencies like, for example, National Science Foundation, that actively support partnerships and alliance arrangements. While a coherent national policy on education and industrial development can assist these alliances, schools, colleges and corporations are working together precisely because they believe there are benefits. They can gain from such an arrangement with or without a national policy in place.

Let me now address the question. The decade of the '80s has been characterized by reports critical of the American education, especially elementary and secondary. The decade of the '90s may well be characterized by extensive restructuring of American education.

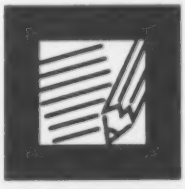
One element of such restructuring involves partnerships among schools, communities, industry and higher education. Why? Because low graduation rates among Latino youth is linked to high drop-out rate of Latino youth. This is not a single variable program; therefore, we must look for multi-dimensional solutions.

We need to affect pre-college education if we are serious about conforming our schooling across the educational continuum from "K" to 12 to graduate studies. In order to upgrade the teaching profession, for example, we must address the professional work experience of teachers. A promising path for enhancing the teaching profession is to support beneficial relationships between "K" through 12 and higher education faculty, to provide a forum, for example, that permits teachers to work together in addressing specific curricular concerns within their discipline.

This provides an opportunity for a comprehensive approach and move away from the piecemeal approaches to addressing the many needs facing American education. There have been some model projects and partnerships throughout the United States from whom we can learn. Project STET (phonetic) at UC Irvine, Santana Unified School District in the Orange County community is a good example.

Project TOWSA (phonetic) at the Anna G. Mendez university system is an older one that I know very well.

Why is Project TOWSA a successful partnership? I will be happy to talk about that after I give some time for my colleagues.



Ms. Pena: Okay. Thank you very much, Dr. Ortiz. I'd like now to go to the other end of the table to Congressman Linares.

Mr. Linares: Councilman. Thank you. I appreciate the opportunity to be part of this panel addressing such a fundamental issue to our future as Latinos in this country.

The research for ways to use full partnership to effectively improve the professional achievement of more Latino students requires for us to frame the issues by looking at at least three questions.

First, what are the problems impacting on Latino high school students' graduation rates? Those graduation rates determine the overall number of Latinos who have the option to or actually do enter college. Second, what are the problems impacting the levels of skills in academic preparation of first-year Latinos entering college? And, third, what are the problems currently impacting on Latino college students' graduating rates; that is to say, what are the problems specifically related to the college setting and circumstances that particularly affect Latinos?

In the interim report of the Latino Commission of Educational Reforms submitted to the New York City Board of Education about a year ago, the commission reports among its findings the following: Latino students are likely to attend under-achieving schools. One in four Latino ninth-graders did not complete high school; four years later, as of June 1991, showing a drop-out rate that was 40 percent higher for Latinos than for all students.

By the time they arrive in high school, Latino students are far behind others in terms of academic achievement. Latino students are severely under-represented in four specialized academic high schools whose drop-out rates are among the lowest city-wide.

First, a successful alliance requires that each party recognize the aspirations, fears, values and goals that each one brings to the partnership.

As a result of how teachers are distributed in the New York City schools based on seniority and credentials, resources in terms of personnel are sorely lacking in many predominantly Latino districts. This is not the first time the issue of educational achievement among Latinos is addressed, and it will not be the last one, if we are really tackling the problem effectively.

In any case, our main concern should be how to be effective. We must try to create viable initiatives which are able to have a measurable impact on the problem. I want to underline that, in order for us to achieve this goal, we have to be realistic without losing sight of the maximum goals. We have to somehow guarantee effectiveness, that is, to avoid the lack of effectiveness that other initiatives have confronted in the past.

We cannot afford to continue to accumulate frustration in our communities due to failed attempts in education; therefore, we have to identify which solutions are doable for each aspect of the problem and what steps does each of the solutions require.

Finally, we have to devise a working calendar that defines the steps to take and identify the resources or means we can count on, especially political means, to attack each of the parts of the problem.

The school partnership model certainly offers a structure that many of us have envisioned for years in our communities, the concerted, systematic, mandated collaboration between schools, parents and community groups and businesses. This acknowledgment of the positive impact that community organizations and groups can contribute to education, by the way, has historic dimension for all of us to see education as a collective, graspable, democratic enterprise. In New York State, it is now a mandate, and it is a good first step for the right direction.

The decade of the '80s has been characterized by reports critical of the American education, especially elementary and secondary. The decade of the '90s may well be characterized by extensive restructuring of American education.

To promote the utilization of school partnerships to give Latino education achievement a big measurable foot forward, I suggest the following: the creation of a national Latino commission or working group for school partnerships which would identify Latino majority school districts and schools appropriate for school partnership experiments and generate funds to implement this partnership, at least as a three-year pilot endeavor.

This Latino working group would be formed by Latino elected officials, Latino education activist groups, Latino educators for all educational levels, Latino parents, educational activists, and major Latino corporations and businesses throughout the country willing to donate time and financial resources to make a real measurable impact possible.

I also propose that this Latino national initiative for school partnership includes in its composition the diverse national backgrounds of all Latino people in the United States as already shown by the 1990 population census. This inclusion effort will definitely guarantee the parental and community such initiative means.

Introducing a federal legislation initiative on education that will mandate the larger allocation of federal funds for after-school tutorial, remedial, artistic and recreational enrichment programs, specifically targeting low-income school districts and low-income schools within districts, as a guaranteed action to all students in those districts.

It was already indicated that Latino students tend to be overwhelmingly located in low-income school districts and schools. This would be a flexible and yet straight avenue to effectively reach them. Also, such an initiative would hopefully find sympathy and sup-

port from all other minority elected officials in the federal Congress and our big cities where the devastating public education crisis is hitting equally Latinos, African-American, Asians and other minorities.

Latino students are likely to attend under-achieving schools.

This school partnership federal initiative could also include the concept of beacon schools currently being tried in several big cities, which promote the use of schools in their fullest potential as community service centers in neighborhoods where social services are still far from reaching Latinos and other minorities to the extent we deserve.

I propose as well that, with the backing of our federal elected representatives, the possibility is explored to pass legislation considering generous tax breaks to corporations, businesses, and coalition of businesses of all sorts that decide to participate as partners in school partnerships located in the targeted districts and schools.

Finally, I would suggest that this federal initiative for school partnerships mandatorily establishes the inclusion of community-based organizations as an integral permanent part of these partnerships. CBOs represent the most authentic local grassroot effort of our people to respond to the many challenges we confront; and, in districts where CBOs may be nonexistent or still developing, this proposed initiative would require the bigger organizations or corporations will promote school partnerships — do include these local CBOs in partnerships so that local organizational development and staffing can take place in a sea for further initiatives.

I'd just like to conclude by pointing to one program that exists in New York City that I have become familiar with in recent months. There is a young, dynamic high school dropout. He happens to be Dominican-American. His name is Fernando Martel, whom I met recently. This young person is president of a corporation called Carpet Fashions. He started putting up carpets. He also happened — that's how I've known him — to be the contractor in New York City who put up the carpet for the Democratic National Convention as well. This young person, 35 years old, came up with the idea of establishing an institute in a correctional facility in New York City, Rykers Island.

This facility approaches first offenders and offers them the opportunity to get training and, if they fulfill the commitment to that training, he guarantees them a job in a corporation. This program is now being looked at nationally for implementation. This program doesn't cost one penny in public funds. It is really the initiative and the conception of this young person who said, "I am ready to give something back to young people like me." He's 35 years old.

Right now, I'm looking to working with him to make sure that New York City institutionalizes this program; but, more than that, I'm looking to have this program take root in our communities and be brought so that it becomes not just an intervention after someone has done something wrong, but it becomes a mechanism for prevention with young people, and committing the corporate sector, government, in a real way along with the community to really make that type of difference. And I think that's really what we really have to look at, where our strength lies, and Fernando Martel is symbolic of that. Thank you.

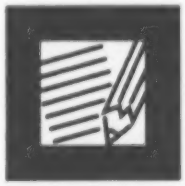
Ms. Pena: Thank you very much. I'd like now to turn the mike over to Congressman Xavier Becerra, who represents the new 30th District in California. He has a laundry list of committees that he serves on, including Education, Labor, Judiciary, and Science, Space and Technology.

Mr. Becerra: Thank you very much. Let me see if I can try to keep my remarks very confined. I really believe — let me first ask, how many of you have ever entered a room where we have said, "Let's try to get something done," and, what do we have here, 60 people in the room, and there's 60 different ideas. You can multiply that and come up with even more. And, by the end of the day, you have three people committed to do the work. That is what we always see, and any time we're discussing any type of policy or changing policy, especially when we're talking about influencing the lives of our children, obviously one of the first things we have to do is to make a commitment.

The school partnership model certainly offers a structure that many of us have envisioned for years in our communities, the concerted, systematic, mandated collaboration between schools, parents and community groups and businesses.

So I would think the first thing we'd do with corporation or with community group, what is it, "A," Corporation "A." Community Group "B," and the School System "C" is, first, have them come to the table and say, "What do you have to offer? What are you assets, and what are your deficits? Before we go any further, let us assess what we have on this table."

And that, to me, means that we have to take a look at what each one brings and is willing to commit and follow through with; and I would say some of the assets that I can see from these three groups are the following: Community group obviously brings access to families and neighborhoods or, at least, the research indicates they would. Corporations, at least it used to be, could bring resources to the table, from charitable contributions to access to other corporations or, if nothing else, to the commitment in the future for these children, once they graduate from college, of a job. And, finally, with regard to the school system, any public body, you bring the whole concept of public policy and how you form it, and the commitment



there can not only influence that particular school system, but perhaps each and every different form of government, from the federal government down to city government.

What are some of the deficits? I think they'll become very obvious from these three groups. Well, I can't think of very many government agencies, let alone school districts, that don't have budget deficits to begin with. So we're talking about a lack of money within that school system, I would suspect.

Corporations, how many of them have you found have the money these days to give up very generously for corporate contributions?

Community group, how many of us can say that now it's safe for us to walk into certain parts of the neighborhood easily and try to recruit or promote community participation? I think you're going to find that the breakdown within the community, in fact even as far as the breakdown of the family, makes it more difficult now for community groups to have success in mobilizing people.

Finally, I think we have to look at perhaps the most difficult deficit that we face in this particular union; and that is, of course, the problems that exist that are somewhat entrenched in the system. How do we resolve the problem of the LEP, limited English proficient child? How do we resolve the issue of gang violence and gang participation? How do we resolve the problem of lack of school safety before we even talk about educating kids to go on to college? And how do we deal with the problem of the infrastructure that we're having to deal with for the most part in the schools? It may never be addressed.

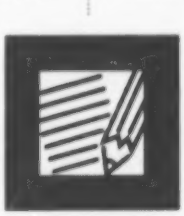
Those are some major deficits that I think we must first address.

But, once we've weighed our assets and once we've looked at our deficits, I think then we go to the next stage. Given our constraints, given our reach, what will we commit to? What will that contract, that binding contract, between those three parties say?

I believe there must be a contract. We cannot let the school system or any government entity say, "Great, go with it, fly with it," and find that that school system or that government agency is not passing the policies necessary to implement the program.

I don't believe we should have corporations involved unless they're willing to bring to the table some money and some commitment to the future to hire some of these kids who are graduating from college. There must be a commitment.

Can they make that commitment? I believe they can, and I believe they should. Do they know what the person will look like in five, 10, 20 years? No, they don't; but, if we're guaranteeing that the community group and the school system will work to ensure that the person is competent and very qualified, then there's little need to worry about that, because we'll be graduating people who will be able to succeed and will be an asset to this particular corporation.



So the contract, to me, is important, because it shows that there will be a commitment, not only by the three, but by the 60.

And, once we've locked in a commitment and, again, I believe that we should be very realistic in this commitment — we should not reach for the sky that first day. We should understand based on our deficits where we can go.

We then turn to what the solution will be to try to get to the point where we are graduating many more Latinos from college. I think our solution must include the following components. I can't see how any solution would not include bilingual education or the teaching of limited English proficient children in some very intense, very expanded facet.

CBOs represent the most authentic local grassroot effort of our people to respond to the many challenges we confront;

Right now, for example, at the federal level where I am a member from, we fund bilingual education to the tune of about $200,000,000. That's enough money to reach about 10 to 15 percent of all the kids in this nation who are eligible for bilingual services. There is no way in the world that $200,000,000 on the federal side would ever get us to the point where we are educating all the kids that are limited English proficient, who need these bilingual services now.

We must not only demand, but ensure family participation, parental involvement in the education of children, and I say "demand," and that's part of that social contract that we have with the three groups, that the educational system will ensure that part of its curriculum includes parental participation, that corporations will do what they can, whether it's providing some resources or making the facilities available to ensure the parents that participate, and that we have a community group that's committed to ensure that it will help pull out the families, parents, to make sure that there is participation.

The next component, I believe, and I think we'll see this in the future regardless of what we all do, is we will see the school become the hub of the neighborhood. We will no longer see the school's lights go out at five p.m. and close until the next morning when they turn back on at 7:30 a.m. We will see the lights on in a school stay lit throughout the evening because it will be used as a social hub for that particular community, whether it's to provide additional day care, whether it's to provide some of the social service departments of some of the community people there, whether it's to provide public benefits access, whether it's to provide access to social security for the elderly, for families who care for their parents, their elderly parents, at home. We will find that the school will become a social network, that will become the hub. Not only will the parents see the school as a place where they children go, but the school will be a place where they go as well.

As I said at the beginning, a corporation in its contract must commit to open its doors. That must be part of the solution, that we have a commitment by those corporate entities involved, that they will hire,

not that they will try to hire or they will try to find jobs or help place these people; they, themselves, will hire some of these individuals.

Finally, it's not mentioned as part of the three groups that are included, but I would make sure that someone, whether it's a school system, whether it's the corporations or the community group, includes our systems of higher education components because just as a corporation must keep its doors open, so must the colleges.

We must ensure that the colleges are ready to accept Latinos who show the capability of going on and doing a very good job. And we must ensure that the people we're asking them to accept will do well, will lend credence and credibility to the reputation of that college accepting that student. If we do that, I think we're well on our way to having the solution that will show that we can improve the number of students who graduate from college who are Latinos.

But I think, first and foremost, we have to step way back and, at the beginning, say, "What do we have? What's on the table? What will we commit to do?" And don't leave the room, 5" people, once we're ready to start working. Thank you.

Ms. Pena: Thank you very much, Congressman Becerra. Now we'd like to hear from Magdalena Lewis.

Ms. Lewis: Thank you. I would like to thank the Hispanic Congressional Caucus for this opportunity to discuss the improvement of Hispanic education.

I think you're going to find that the breakdown within the community, in fact even as far as the breakdown of the family, makes it more difficult now for community groups to have success in mobilizing people.

The National Committee for Citizens in Education, which is the organization that I represent today, is a national non-profit organization dedicated to the improvement of public education for parent citizen involvement.

NCC has been in existence for 20 years. During these years, NCC has produced numerous publications, provided training for parents and practitioners, influenced public policy to ensure parent participation in the education of their children, and certainly we have provided literature in these fields.

For the last seven years, NCC has intensified its outreach in the Hispanic community in three important ways: through the bilingual — for Hispanic education; production of bilingual, culturally sensitive materials for parents; and Padres a la Escuela, a program to motivate Hispanic parents to participate in the education of their children.

We have heard the concerns of Hispanic families, and in this conference I hope to be able to bring to the forefront the voices which bring equal educational opportunities for their children.

My first reaction to the question presented for discussion in this panel is that a good guide to develop a partnership model to graduate multi-Hispanic youth from college is missing a component. We have Corporation "A," Community-Based Organization "B," and School "C." We are missing the parent citizen representation, either as individuals or as recognized groups. I wonder why we forget about the parents so frequently.

We will find that the school will become a social network, that will become the hub. Not only will the parents see the school as a place where they children go, but the school will be a place where they go as well.

But, before I enter into the discussion about parent involvement, I would like to highlight or review all the issues related to education of Hispanics that have significant impact on the college graduation rate of Hispanic youth.

We must start by looking at the conditions of Hispanic children from the early ages. The extent of the educational disadvantage for Hispanics goes from pre-school through post-secondary education. Many educational and socio-economic components have significant impact on the college graduation rates of Hispanic youth.

Pre-school, for example, Hispanic children are less likely to attend pre-school programs in private or public, that ratio, every group. Hispanic children also deserve to enter elementary schools ready to learn.

More free and cultural-sensitive childhood programs are necessary, along with information for parents about program availability and importance for children attending pre-school. Parent involvement at this stage is important to create in the child a value of the importance of education.

Educational attainment, overall, Hispanics complete fewer years of the school than other groups. They have the highest drop-out rates, low rates of college enrollment, and high rates of illiteracy. The Hispanic youth face many challenges: limited English proficiency, poverty, and lower teachers' expectations. Bilingual education programs, as was mentioned already, mandatory training for teachers of cultural awareness, and parent involvement exemplify important parts of the whole.

The school enrollment, Latino children face serious difficulties while in a school: enrollment below grade level, high rates of school suspension and detention, low enrollment in gifted and talented programs, lack of role models, and inappropriate or low participation in extracurricular activities.

Next come the advocates that participate in the decision-making policies relating to the children's education. In fact, most of these conditions that affect educational outcomes of Hispanic children can be overcome by policies and legislations at different levels. The parent participation in the education of the children is of great significance.

Research has demonstrated that, regardless of race, ethnic or socioeconomic background, when parents

are involved, children do better in the school and go to better schools.

Other benefits which result from parent participation are higher grades and test scores, long improvement in academic achievement, positive attitude and behavior, and more successful programs.

The benefits of parental involvement are not confined to any ages or to the elementary school. There are strong effects from involving parents throughout the high school years, which leads to graduation. There is not one basic way to go about parent involvement. What works is for parents to be involved in a variety of roles over a period of time.

The way parents become involved does not seem to be as important as it is well planned, comprehensive and long lasting. There is no right or wrong definition of parent involvement. Because the process provides a wide variety of possibilities, parents might play different roles in the education of their children. Their roles might change from providing a safe and healthy environment at home to helping their children learn and to support school events, or from acting as an advocate for the individual child to direct involvement in decisions affecting local education and having a voice in the school programs.

Parent involvement is not the only component necessary to ensure higher completion rates, but it is a fundamental component. The values of the family, the school and the community must be recognized and expected to guarantee successful student outcomes.

Parents need to be involved in the education of their children at home, in school and in their community. Equally important, parents and community need to be involved in the decisions that affect their child's education. Every school and every program to improve education outcomes of Hispanic children need a comprehensive parent and community involvement component. Thank you.

Ms. Pena: Okay. Thank you, Magdalena Lewis. And now Emilio Fox.

Mr. Fox: Thank you. Good morning. I, too, of course, appreciate the opportunity to be here. I am a region superintendent in the daytime public schools, and I know that you all read about Miami at least twice a week, but we have a large exciting and driving school system that takes in about 310,000 students every morning and grows by approximately 12,000 students every year. Most of those students are from Central and South America, Caribbean.

What I do for a living is I supervise operations of 37 schools, pre-kindergarten through 12, and I'm telling you that so that you understand my perspective or my piece in this particular program.

I am a school operations person. I'm an administrator and, as such, I believe that everything that happens regarding education, anything that happens regarding what we do with students should have one very focused desired outcome, and that is improvement.

So, from that perspective, let me also tell you that I have become increasingly convinced, as I see the evolution of not just the school system but the social fabric of our communities, that that old African proverb that is used more and more, "It takes a whole village to educate a child," is something that we're going to have to frame and put over every lintel of every door, because if we do not commit ourselves to that, we are committing ourselves to failure.

What I did in trying to approach this question was look at some of the things that perhaps we're doing right, some of the things that are challenges, from the three perspectives that were posed in the question.

So let me start with educational challenges, and I do intend to be very brief. I guess we all say that when we start, but you all know better. (Laughter.) I think that we need to really focus on providing elementary level programs that nurture and prepare students for more academically rigorous secondary programs. I think that somehow we've never made the link even within the public K-12 school system between being very child oriented at the elementary level and very program oriented at the middle and senior high school level. So we stop educating the child and we start teaching the program, making sure we cover the objectives.

I think that we need constant monitoring of programs for limited English proficient students to guarantee timely and appropriate placement into and out of programs. As an educator, as a teacher, as an administrator, I've seen too many examples of people saying, "Let's give this kid a couple of years to learn the language before we do 'X' or 'Y,'" or "Let's not do this because this particular student is now in a program for speakers of other languages." We have too often postponed educational, academic decisions that should have taken place based on language acquisition rather than rate of intelligence.

The parent participation in the education of the children is of great significance. Research has demonstrated that, regardless of race, ethnic or socioeconomic background, when parents are involved, children do better in the school and go to better schools.

I think we need to work with teachers and counselors so that the post-secondary centers can affect training programs which acquaint staff with cultural differences, make staff sensitive to different needs of different student groups, and stress the identification and placement of students in advanced academic offerings and honors offerings right from the get-go, whether a kid is conversant in a language or not. We can value a potential intelligence and ability without having to limit that to language proficiency.

I think we need to continue to stress to all staff — and I'm being redundant. You'll hear some of the same points made over and over from different perspectives, but we need to continue to stress that language and potential are not directly connected, which I know is hard to unlearn, that is, hard to learn. Even

coming from the majority Latino district with a tremendous number of Spanish speaking teachers from all kinds of backgrounds, that is hard to unlearn.

I think that we need to continue to explore ways in which meaningful instruction in a whole language can be delivered as part of our curriculum, and that's tied to not impeding progress while students are learning the English language. We need to continue to pursue the development and selection of culturally sensitive curriculum materials with which students from various backgrounds can identify. We need to continue to work with colleges and universities to develop programs that pick up students and place them in programs that stress mentoring, counseling and support, both from peers as well as staff and faculty at these institutions.

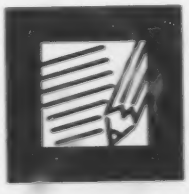
We need to continue to work with our college assistance programs to make sure that available dollars are targeted to youth from a whole spectrum of backgrounds rather than a selected group. There hasn't always been and there isn't now equal access to college assistance program dollars.

I think we need to — moving beyond the K-12, we need to do some very basic things that I think we lose track of sometimes; and, that is, we need to offer adult classes to community members at large, to orient adult immigrants and their children. We need to work with parents to make sure that they know how to avail themselves of opportunities to access the system. The "system," quotation marks, is this dinosaur where you've got to really know what you're doing to hold it by its leash and move it, and so on, and that takes training. It takes a concerted effort on the part of those inside the system as well as those outside. We need to reach into the community. We need to reach into the home with information and opportunities.

I don't believe we should have corporations involved unless they're willing to bring to the table some money and some commitment to the future to hire some of these kids who are graduating from college. There must be a commitment..

We need to continue — we are finding this out more and more. We need to continue to explore formats to enable the use of the consumers, the community and the students, to assist us in formulating the agenda. We've never asked people, "What do you need?" We've never asked people, "What do you want?" or "What tools do you need to get from here to there?" We've basically said, "Here, this is what you need, this is what you're going to have to do to get what you need."

We've had a couple of situations in Dade County where people who are community representatives who were very meek and soft spoken and tentative two years ago are now in charge of developing, producing agendas, laying out goals, and it's very satisfying and gratifying to see that we can ask the new system what the needs are, we can respond very articulately.



We have situations, and you all know, where a student that we're talking about is very likely a student that wants to access the job market now, wants income now, wants to send money home back to Nicaragua or Honduras or wherever, wants to get out of the apartment where there are three families living in a two-bedroom situation, and that is an obstacle that must be overcome.

And I think at this point is where I would bring in the second part of the partnership, and that would be the corporate entity. I would like to see, if I had my wish, a corporate partner who provides as many early opportunities for Latinos to glimpse the world of the corporate environment and the world of college graduates.

I would like the corporate partner which provides mentoring activities, shadowing activities, internships, as many career and field experiences for young people as they can possibly participate in, and, of course, work study programs and scholarship opportunities to satisfy the need for income as experience is gained.

The whole effort must, of course, be developed within the context of understanding of the cultures and the needs of the students that we're talking about, because traditional contexts will not work.

Finally, as regards my social agency partner, I would like that partner to do as much as possible to assist in bringing to the community stability; and, to bring stability to the community, you need to plug that community into available services, beginning with orientation, just as basic as orientation to the area, available services, programs, assistance with employment, referrals for day care, referrals for housing and medical services, and those kinds of activities we have found in our situation, and we're in our third year of a very exciting project on Miami Beach, South Beach as a matter of fact, that has brought a tremendous measure of stability to the neighborhood. And, as several others on the panel have already said, stability breeds stability, stability breeds success.

Those are some of the broad strokes and general ideas that occurred to me when I saw the letter. Thank you.

Ms. Pena: Okay. Thank you, Emilio Fox. Now I'd like to turn the podium over to Melvin Delgado.

Mr. Delgado: Thank you. I wouldn't want to be the moderator on a panel like this because you deal with people who are used to professing, and to control time is very, very difficult. I hope you weren't expecting a Bostonian accent. I think I should deal with that straightforward. What you've got is a South Bronx accent, who happens to be in Boston.

I'm going to take a slightly different tack from my colleagues, and I want to tell you a story, and hopefully that will set the foundation. There's a school district not too far from where I work that had a parents' night, and there are many, many Puerto Rican parents in this school district; and the night they had the parents' night, they had one teacher in the front office who was directing parents to the classrooms, and she was sitting in an office with big paned windows. So she had one Puerto Rican

mother come in and ask for directions for a teacher, and she gave them; and, then when she walked outside — this teacher is following this — the mother goes like this, and there were about eight people who came and left with her.

The teacher who gave directions was worried because she thought that this group was going to go beat up the teacher. So they called the police. Yeah, they called the police. Well, to make a long story short, they were not there to beat up the teacher. The teacher expected one person, a mother, because we don't have entire families in our communities supposedly; the people did not look alike, different shapes, different sizes; but the bottom line is that that was a coalition of parents who were concerned. They were godparents, older sibling, next-door neighbor, mother — I can go on down the line.

So here's a situation that I believe is major in our communities, is that you're dealing with stereotypical views of our community. We have no strengths, yet we survive, and I always believe that's our basic strength, which tends to be down-played in society.

Partnership, as I look at that scenario "A," "B," and "C" and I say what's wrong this picture, I would say several things come to my mind. Number one is that the picture is a little too narrow. In this society when we view our community, we view our community as individuals. There are many people in our community who should be part of that equation. We've got the religious community that very rarely is mentioned, yet they're making significant roles into our community.

You've got parents, as mentioned. We don't have students there, but I think students should be part of that. We've got community leaders, and I can go on down the line. It's got to be a broader coalition. This is not an individual phenomenon because we're living in an individual society. This is a community issue.

Education must be relevant, and we tend to lose sight of that sometimes; and my best experience is when I learned how to read and write, and I learned how to read and write using "Dick, Jane and Spots." Many people learned how to read and write with that. But I'll be quite honest, I could not relate to "Dick, Jane and Spots." The closest thing to a picket fence we had in our community was on TV. Spots, a dog, we could not afford to have a pet, and any dog you found on the street, you didn't want as a pet.

And it doesn't mean that we cannot learn, but when we can tie that experience into our own experiences, learning is so much more fascinating.

There's a conception out there that we talk about pre-readiness to learn. Nothing could be more false. Babies are born learning. Our kids are born learning. It isn't at age four they say, "I'm pre-ready to learn." It doesn't work that way. In fact, they know a great deal.

The literature is very, very clear. Our kids start off doing very well in the early grades and, as they progress, something happens. If you look at the professional literature, most of it focuses on drop-outs. I think that's important, but what happens to kindergarten, first, second and third grade? My interests are in those years, because the kids have a great deal on the ball, but something systemically happens that they tune out.

My colleagues have mentioned corporations, and I'm a firm believer that corporations are very important, but maybe it's my part of the country. The only corporations that want to give us money are the alcohol and tobacco industry, and I've got some philosophical issue with that, to be quite honest. (Laughter.) I do not like to see a Latino festival that has a beer symbol right next to the organization's name.

And, as I talk to community leaders, we're caught between a rock and a hard place, and I understand that, but there's a certain message that we're giving to our community the more we do take that kind of money, and it's an issue of what is clean money and what is dirty money, and some people will argue that money is green. I don't advise that.

Parent involvement is not the only component necessary to ensure higher completion rates, but it is a fundamental component.

It's important to look at our communities from a point of view of strength. There has to be a shift in a paradox; and, that is, there are things that we've got going for us that very few people want to look at. It's much easier for me to get money to do research on what's wrong with our community, and I can talk about child abuse, neglect. I can talk about drug. I can talk about drop-out, teen pregnancy. But most of our kids are not abusing drugs. Most of our kids are not pregnant. Most of our kids are not dropping out. We don't understand why didn't they make it through.

And I think I've got my theories behind it, but there's very little literature out there looking at resilience. I think that's very important.

I think my colleagues are very articulate in saying, "I believe schools are our schools." As I go in and do studies and I ask people in the community, "What is your community?" very rarely do they mention schools that may be right in the center of the community. When I go in and talk to school personnel, I ask them to describe their community. Very rarely do they describe anything past their walls, and there's something wrong with that picture. I want schools open. I want the parents to go in and not just drop their kids off. If they want to stay, they can stay.

Schools are also non-stigmatizing, depending upon where you're at. I found the best schools are schools that have principals that leave their office and leave the building. I want school principals and teachers to know their community. I want them to feel comfortable going out into the community.

We send a message when we say it's not safe, yet our families and our children live there 24 hours a day. There's a commitment. It is not a commitment

that I ask of others that I do not ask for myself. I'm out there, too, but I'm very unusually in a university setting because we professors tend to stay behind and profess.

> ...I have become increasingly convinced, as I see the evolution of not just the school system but the social fabric of our communities, that that old African proverb that is used more and more, "It takes a whole village to educate a child," is something that we're going to have to frame and put over every lintel of every door, because if we do not commit ourselves to that, we are committing ourselves to failure.

Rightly so, my colleagues say, universities should be held accountable. We're tax-free and, for no other reason, we are paying the taxes in the community for those institutions. There's much services that can be provided and there's much that we can learn. Unfortunately, we have a reputation for exploiting the community on behalf of truth and knowledge, and there are many communities now that are saying, "We don't want you here," unless we're prepared to give something back. And there has to be that kind of accountability.

And, last but not least, this is not an easy process. I realize that. But nothing is easy in our community. We're patient. Goodness knows, patience is a virtue, and we're very virtuous people. Sacrifice is not new for us either. Cooperation is not new for us either. The elements are there. It means that, when we come together, this is not a 100-yard dash that I think my colleagues alluded to. This is a marathon. This is something that, if I want to take on, I will retire of old age and I'm still struggling with it.

It is my firm belief that life without cause is life with very little meaning, and this is an issue that we're going to have to all possibly answer, we're going to have to argue, we're going to have to debate, but we're not going to leave that room until we have something to put into place. Thank you.

Ms. Pena: Okay. Thank you very much, Melvin Delgado. Next, last but not least is Hector Garza.

Mr. Garza: Well, one thing that I've learned this morning is that, when you invite seven people to join a panel, if you sit in the middle, you become disadvantaged automatically. And the other thing that I've noted is that being a person that's interested in group dynamics and scouting the room, I feel that you guys are tired and I see that you're tired and that you want to have a chance to talk. I promise that I will be brief.

One of the problems that I had with the question — and to prove that, I'm going to defer from the prepared text and just talk to you about some observations that I've made in the presentations that my panel have already given.

One of the problems that I had with this question as it was phrased was that it really required a reframing of that question. We're dealing with the post-secondary education, higher education, and yet while it is important for various sectors to come into play as it relates to education, and I'm a firm believer of that, and if we're really talking about systemic change in education, educational reform, we really need to learn how to start talking inter-segmentally and beyond the education sector to include the corporate sector and the community and the religious area and things like that.

You know, hearing us and talking about our own experience with developing a partnership in education collaboratives in our own sector may lead you to believe that this is something that we really know how to do; and we may, in fact, know how to do it as it relates to our own sector. The higher ed. community has been developing educational partnerships with the corporate sector as the business higher ed. community for a very long time. We know how to do that.

We've been less successful in outreach to the community and developing collaboratives with the community itself, but yet "K" through 12 can give you more experience in doing that.

The real issue is that we have not brought all of these components together to start talking about an educational pipeline, an educational stream that impacts all of the sectors. That, I believe, is a real challenge that we face these things.

There are some new initiatives that are in place right now funded by different foundations. The Ford Foundation is one that I'm most familiar with, the urban partnership program. The urban partnership program through the Ford Foundation has attempted to bring all of the players to the table and has attempted to say to all of the players, "We realize that you have expertise in a certain segment, delivering service to a certain component of the educational stream. We want to bring you all together to start learning how to collaborate. We want to bring you all together to talk about different resources that are available within your sector in terms of expertise and other kinds of resources."

This is fairly new, folks. I'm going to suggest to you, and I firmly assert, that you really don't have a lot of experience bringing all of the groups to the table and that, in fact, that is what is necessary as it relates to the Latino agenda. I really do think that we need to learn how to do that better.

Yes, in fact, we may have been collaborating with our own — in "K" through 12 with our own communities, and we may know how to involve parents at that level, but yet when you bring parental involvement into the higher ed. sector, we've never even discussed that. I mean, parents' access to our four-year institutions and even two-year institutions has been rather limited. So there is a model by which we can learn from the "K" through 12 community itself.

So, in a nutshell, we have a long way to go. There are elements out there that can be pieced together to make effective partnerships work. The corporate sector has been out there, but I would also include them in really not knowing how they fit into this picture; and we need to work with them to make sure that, in fact, the partnership is effective.

Let me stop there with those observations, to really bring it to the audience for questions.

Ms. Pena: Okay. I think this is a perfect opportunity. We have just about an hour now because we really have to be out of here by 11:30 to break for lunch. Janet Reno is going to be the guest speaker; and, of course, she's on a very tight schedule. So we'll have to make this as concise as we can.

We're going to do this Oprah Winfrey style, folks, so if you'll raise your hand. Who has the first question? All right. We'll start off with you.

The Audience: Good morning. My name is Rema Satuno (phonetic), and I'm currently a senior at the University of California in Santa Barbara, where I major in political science and Spanish. Right now I'm an intern in a caucus, and I thank you all for being here.

I have a comment and a question. First, I wanted to comment on what Ms. Quezada said about money and college, which is a very difficult experience for anybody. I'm living it right now. You have to count your pennies every minute, and it's really difficult.

I think one of the problems is how to finance your education, how to actually graduate from school, and what I found which was the biggest problem, especially with my Latino friends, was that the "L" word or "loan" is very difficult for Latino families to accept and think about.

The first time I went to my house with a Stafford loan application in my hand, my mother almost fainted. She doesn't believe in getting into debt or owing back to America thousands of dollars, but I had to remind her that she taught me to finish what I start; and, if I'm a third year and I have one or two years to finish school, I'm going to do it no matter what, whichever way I have to.

So right now I'll be graduating in June, in a double major, and I'll be owing about $12,000, but I also will be the first one in my family to get a degree, to get a college degree and go on to law school and get my degree in immigration law. So — (Applause.) So it can be done, and that's what we have to let families know. A loan is not something that's going to — it's going to hurt you because you have to pay it back, but you can do it if you are prepared, and you can have a good job out there.

My question is to the panel. I know we're all responsible for this, for getting Latinos into college and getting Latinos graduating from college, but what can I do? Because I know I'm responsible, too, because I'm in a program right now with 110 students in the University of California. Six of us are Latinos, from 110. That's ridiculous to me. It really bothered me. I want to see more Latinos out there graduating with college degrees, CEOs in corporations, members of Congress. You know, it's a great thing.

So I want to ask you, what can I do to make that happen?

Ms. Pena: Leticia Quezada, do you want to answer that?

Ms. Quezada: I think I mentioned that we have a graduate from L.A. Public Schools, and now you've gotten to meet her, and it's a real pleasure and I'm really proud of her.

Let me make a couple of comments before I get to your question about what you can do, because I don't want to miss the opportunity of things that we all can do now as we go back to our communities, that we all can do that, and I'm going to add this issue of the loan.

Something that's happening in Los Angeles and California, I imagine has to be happening across the country, and that is this current wave of anti-immigrant bashing. Now, one of the issues that has not been discussed in this arena is that, all of a sudden, as I start looking at scholarship applications and announcements coming through my office at the L.A. School District, it's more and more of them are beginning to have a little line that say on requirements, it says "U.S. citizenship." Since when do you have to be a U.S. citizen to deserve a higher education scholarship?

So I want to ask each and every one of you, as you go back to your communities, no matter what role you play, and in your public schools, in particular, that you question and you take to task, and particularly private companies who require U.S. citizenship for students — in California, any financial aid application that says you must be documented, by definition closes the door, slams the door on many talented Latino high school graduates.

We have countless sacrifice stories. We have a young man from Honduras who came here by himself. He has no family here. Two years ago, he didn't know English. This last June, he was the valedictorian at Roosevelt High School. He's trying to go to Lavern University. As of last week, he sent me a letter; he said, "Ms. Quezada, I need money because I'm not documented and I don't have any money, any financial aid. I qualify academically, but I don't qualify because I don't have any papers."

So I want to ask you to go back to your communities and be a watchdog for scholarship applications that require U.S. citizenship, and especially from Latino organizations. We just fall into the trap without even thinking about it. As you go back to your community, that you start looking at programs that tell our parents it's okay to get a loan for their student.

We can value a potential intelligence and ability without having to limit that to language proficiency.

I graduated from the UC system. I owed $3,000, and I thought it was an enormous amount. Twelve thousand dollars is not anything if you amortize it over the life span of — but we have to tell our parents it's okay to owe money.

Another thing I'm going to ask you to do when you go back, and, Rema, this could be something that you can do, is to make sure that no student in your school and that no young person that you know, no counselor in any neighborhood school is telling our students, "Why do you bother to be in a college preparatory course? It won't do you any good. You can't afford to go to college. Your parents won't let you go to college. You're not really going to finish. So why start?"

We can't let the low expectations of some counselors, which still exists today, we can't let that go unchallenged. I met with Congressman Martinez yes-

terday, Matthew Martinez. He was telling me that his daughter was told, "Why do you bother? You'll never be able to go to college." That still happens today. We can't let that go by.

We have to enable students to help each other, whether at the high school level, at college universities. Rema, the best thing that you can do is be a model for other Latino students at the college level and at the high school level, and you need to be a support among each other to find those financial resources that you're going to need to get through to college, to empower other students who feel less confident that they are going to finish, to empower them to feel that confidence.

Lastly, I'm going to ask you to do what I think we need to do; that is, we need to ask universities, colleges, universities, public and private, to publish their drop-out reports, to publish how many Latino students do they admit and how many do they graduate. And I tell you that, when universities are required to publish those reports, they're going to get up and do something real quick to make sure that they do graduate them, so that their numbers are not bad. Today those numbers are so horrendous, they would be embarrassed to be published.

Ms. Pena: Okay. We have a whole lot of questions here, and we're going to continue on with Dan Rodriguez.

Mr. Rodriguez: Hello. My name is Dan Rodriguez. I'm with Channel 13, WNET, in New York City. Some years ago when I was in college, an idealist, I might add, I ran for the Board of Education in my community, because I saw in my community a large and growing and young Hispanic population, but no true representation at the policy level. I ran and I won and I became, later on I understood, that I was the first Hispanic elected in my county.

We need to work with parents to make sure that they know how to avail themselves of opportunities to access the system. The "system," quotation marks, is this dinosaur where you've got to really know what you're doing to hold it by its leash and move it, and so on, and that takes training. It takes a concerted effort on the part of those inside the system as well as those outside.

But the experience lent itself to many other unfortunate incidents that go unnoticed because, when you're at that level, the people really don't have the opportunity — you have Hispanic parents who work two shifts, one six to seven in the evening and then, at nine o'clock to midnight, a part-time in a maintenance company. You have these struggles within the community.

So now at Channel 13 in New York City — two years ago when I came to the station, corporate leaders were — we were sitting down with some corporate leaders in New York City, and they said, "You know, there's a lot of kids that just can't read and write, and they're not competent in so many areas." And I asked what particular groups they were describing, and they said minorities.

So I suggested that we work jointly on this effort to combat this issue. A very important race is going on in New York City, the mayor's race, and this year we're having a town hall meeting called Kids Matter. It's a corroborated effort with corporations, foundations, and WNET. There are over one million students in New York City who do not have a vote in the process; and that, to me, indicates that those in the level of policy making have a great deal to hear what's going on at that level.

So I suggest to you — in Los Angeles, you have KCET. Mr. Delgado, in Boston you have a wonderful public television in WGBH — that you go to them, bring this to their attention, and I'm sure something of this magnitude can be done and accomplished, because we're doing it in New York City, and it's very, very important.

Yesterday I was in a panel similar to this, and there was a discussion whether you're a politician or you're not when you're on the board. I've got to tell you, once I got off the board, I was a hardened politician with a great deal of new realities in front. Thank you.

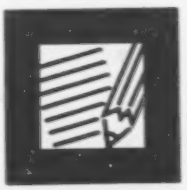
Ms. Pena: Okay. I think you're next.

The Audience: Yes. I'm Maria Hennan (phonetic) here from Chicago. A very interesting aspect of what's happening on the panel here is that it's really asking ourselves to think about creative ways to deal with the number and the complexity of problems faced by our students.

I would like to remind the audience here that our conversations, these conversations and others we're having all over the country about the problems that kids are having in the schools, are defined to a great extent by what's happened in the last 10 years, where all kinds of support services, including the most basic education for kids, have been to an extent systematically dismantled.

And I think that, as long as we talk about definitions, they have sense when we have at least the basics, because then we are asking each one of us to be creative in what we have to do better, but the reality of it all is that — and I'm saying this especially in the context of what's happening in Chicago — the reality of it all is that legislators, the public at large, are daring, I would say, to wash their hands of their responsibilities of financing the most basic needs of our students. They are giving up on our public education systems. They're basically saying minorities should fend for themselves, that it is their problem that they are not doing well in school.

And my question to you all is what, if anything, can communities do on a larger scale, in a more comprehensive way, to deal with that fact? No matter how many private corporations we can seduce to donate a few thousand dollars for scholarships, we're not going to be able to address the fact that financial aid for higher education has dried up so much that it's preventing thousands and thousands of Latinos from even getting in there. It's preventing the dismantling of the public education system. The funding for the public education system is undermining the opportunities for all those kids who are in eighth and ninth grade from even getting out of high school.



I would really like to see what you all have to say about that.

Ms. Pena: Who are you addressing your question to specifically?

The Audience: To whoever wants to answer.

The literature is very, very clear. Our kids start off doing very well in the early grades and, as they progress, something happens.

Mr. Linares: Let me just make one brief comment. I think it was very good and complimentary what we said here, but in my experience in New York City I go back to the same thing. The bottom line is that it is a political question that we're addressing. Bottom line is that who defines the agenda and who has control of that agenda, who decides the priorities for resources, whether human or material, are still the communities that we are talking about here.

So participate in assuming the control for that agenda. To that extent, we're going to see accountability to the needs and to the priorities as perceived by the community itself. That includes the young people that we are trying to address here, their parents, sacrificed as they are, and the entire community, all of the sectors mentioned here.

And, to the young person that spoke before, the answer is it always requires going back, not forgetting where you're coming from, that you got to where you got because many sacrificed along the way, and that the only way that you must — the way that you really can pay back is by returning, not forgetting, and by going back to that community and giving the best that you can, setting an example.

And it is political in that you must become politically involved. You must exercise your democratic right to hold accountable those who are elected or appointed to the needs as you perceive them to be of your community, and I think that that's —where we get a collective sense of that in a very grassroot level, at the base of where our communities are, then there can be a sense of ownership of that agenda. Unless we focus on that, I think we're not going to be able to be effective locally or even at a state level, never mind national. I think that that's the bottom line.

It's really got to be what can we do to really pull together a community agenda, own agenda with the people at the base of the community politically speaking and economically speaking.

Ms. Pena: Hector Garza, you want to say something?

Mr. Garza: Yeah. You know, let me just echo what the councilman has said, and let me suggest to you that, to me, it's frustrating as to how often we forget to re-elect our people, and that if they're not serving you, that you have a choice and you can coordinate it as not to elect them again.

The other thing is accountability. We're all here in Washington. How many, I ask you, how many of you have plans to visit your congress person and to ask them what they're doing on behalf of your community. I bet that very few of you do, but we need to start doing more of that; and, until we do that, things are going to remain the same, and we're going to come here in 10 years and express the same kinds of concerns that this lady is addressing.

Ms. Quezada: Can I just add something real quick? I promise, I promise. But it's very important. To the lady in Chicago, I think, it's very critical. The answer to your question, I've seen as a school board member more and more trends of literally cities and states washing their hands of public education.

Michigan, the State of Michigan, just said, "We will abandon the financing of public schools." Chicago today, I mean, I can't believe that the City of Chicago let that happen. We didn't let that happen in the City of Los Angeles when we were facing bankruptcy last year, and it was a real crisis, and I'm here today with a balanced budget because the City of Los Angeles didn't let us go under.

But the only way we're going to get to that answer is what he said, and it's the vote. It is the vote. In California, for example, we have right now —the 3,000,000 people that apply for amnesty, that come next year, can become U.S. citizens, can become U.S. citizens.

The governor of California was elected with 500,000 votes, 500,000 votes. In Los Angeles alone, we have 800,000 Latinos who can become citizens and can vote in the next governor's election. That is the only way it's going to happen, and across the nation where there are amnesty applicants, when IRCA, in fact, calls for them to become U.S. citizens January of 1994, we have to ensure — our agenda has to ensure that they become U.S. citizens.

...if we're really talking about systemic change in education, educational reform, we really need to learn how to start talking inter-segmentally and beyond the education sector to include the corporate sector and the community and the religious area and things like that.

Today, for example, the SLIAG funds that were supposed to go for citizenship classes to enable them to become citizens are scheduled to be erased, erased from the federal budget. It's $40,000,000 to California alone, for example.

When you visit your Congress representative today, ask them that they have to make sure that the SLIAG funds — there's an extension for the SLIAG funds, so states like California and Texas and New Mexico and other states that participate in an IRCA can make sure that those people become citizens, also make sure that, as voters, we don't let our states abandon public schools.

Mr. Delgado: Excuse me. Have to make one comment, a very quick one; and, that is, I think we have to redefine voting age, because as long as children, kids, up until 18 are not allowed to vote, they're an invisible majority. The moment we redefine what voting age is, and we say 16, 15, I think we're going to

have a very different tone altogether.

The way it's described right now, by the time you're 18, you're disengaged; and, if you look at the research on parents, very few are registered. Even fewer vote. So this idea that it is a political agenda, it is a political force, that until we redefine that age lower, I would think you're going to have a shift in attitudes.

The Audience: My name is Edwin Acosta. Right now I work with the U.S. Student Association, and I want to address what the young woman was talking about earlier, about loans and needing loans to get through school.

About 12-15 years ago, according to 100 percent of what financial aid was for higher education, about 75-80 percent of that was in grants. Over the past 10-15 years, that has been reduced to less than 50 percent. And, of course, a lot of these grants go to people who need them, the needy. For example, the Pell grant, which goes to the needy students, has been authorized for $3,900, but it's appropriated only at 23. So, when you deserve 39, you're not going to get 39. You may get 23, and you have to fill that balance, though, with loans.

Now, unfortunately, Latinos drop out at a high rate out of college. So $12,000 and not having a degree determines whether or not you can pay that back. So it's just $12,000, but if you don't get your degree and then you have $12,000 that you borrow, that's a lot of money.

Now, we're discussing going back with your community. Oftentimes, you go back as an instructor in school, as a social service worker, some type of counselor, and we know that doesn't pay a lot of money either. So determining how much money you're going to have to pay back in loans and how many years it takes you to get out, and that multiplies, you know, it keeps going up — now the average age of a college student is not 21, it's not 20; it's like 24, you see. And so we have a lot of people going back to school, going back to get your education, graduate with a $12,000 loan, have two or three kids already in the house.

And so, when we look at the loan and grant imbalance, we have to look at that again and go back at the grants. Recently, there was a proposal to eliminate the state student incentive plan, which is a federal matching grant to states that goes to needy students. They were just going to eliminate that because, apparently, the White House was saying that, well, it wasn't necessary any more because the states were giving the money to the students, that the states were doing it because they thought the federal government was giving them the money in the first place. If you take that money away, they're not going to get it.

The urban partnership program through the Ford Foundation has attempted to bring all of the players to the table.

There were over 700,000 students who had their award announcements, the letters in the mail, received them in September who, when they were going to go in, they weren't going to get the money. So people expected to go and were not going to receive the money.

I would like the corporate partner which provides mentoring activities, shadowing activities, internships, as many career and field experiences for young people as they can possibly participate in, and, of course, work study programs and scholarship opportunities to satisfy the need for income as experience is gained.

So I think we have to look at that, look at our elected officials and say, "Wait a minute. You authorized it. You saved it. Give the money." And this is not something that's beyond what they can do. They can do it.

And I think that's also one of the ways that we can ensure that the needy students get the aid, because the fact is, if society benefits from students getting an education and going back, that society should help pay for it. And so I think that we should look for the federal government, not only — I think foundations, I think corporations should be supplemental to what the government gives to students. It's their agenda. If they don't pay for us to go to school, then they pay for us to go to jail, they pay for us to go on welfare, they pay for us for all of these other things. So you can prevent this by preventive medicine. Make sure they get their education in the first place.

So that's the comment I'd like to say; and, if you want to get involved, students are very important. The students are there. Students are on campuses and they're doing the work, and they are idealistic, and I don't think we should lose our ideology at all. We can become realistic but still have our idealism. So we should look into that.

And I really want you to understand that, when you go back to campus and organize the students, it really is effective. Thank you.

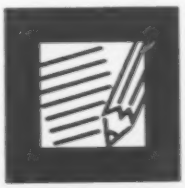
Ms. Lewis: I'd would like to just raise an issue, want to go back to Leticia. It was the issue that — the question that they ask in the forms to enter the college about citizenship.

My suggestion is that any lawyer — contact lawyers in the sense that the Flyer versus Doe court case, Supreme Court case, for discrimination against illegal — of public education, and that can be extended to the college level, for college universities.

So I think looking into the legality of these is a way of — also another way of fighting these unfair situations.

Mr. Moreno: Yes. My name is Gilbert Moreno. I'm the director of the Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans, AAMA. It's a Hispanic non-profit in Houston. And a quick comment and then a question.

In response to Congressman Becerra's comments about the school partnership, the corporate partner-



ship, and the community partnership, I want to tell you it can work. We're doing that in Houston. And our cornerstone educational program is the George I. Sanchez High School. It's a private academic, fully accredited school run by AAMA, a community-based organization, one of the only ones of its kind in the country. In November, we'll celebrate 20 years. We have 230 students there, all former drop-outs. We just did a child development lab. Teen-age parents can bring their children there on site. We have a four-month-old baby now, and 11-month-old child, and numerous toddlers, and it's very exciting to see that; and for the kids to be able to bring their children to school with them, to have a class, teach them parenting skills, and be there with their children throughout the day, it's phenomenal from our perspective. We're very excited about that.

But Sanchez can be done. It's a partnership with the Houston Independent School District. We get about 60 percent of our funding from HISD, and it was done through a bill written by the state legislature. A Hispanic legislator wrote a bill that allows a Texas education agency to subcontract via the school district and then subcontract with a community-based organization.

And, therefore, what happens is, where you have ADA money, the average daily attendance that's being lost for a drop-out is now being brought back into the system. HISD is giving us 2.5"8 per student, and it ultimately results this year in a half-million dollar contract for our school. Our total educational budget is 1.3 million out of a $4,000,000 agency.

So there is lots of money involved, and obviously you have to handle the money very effectively. I can tell you I'm a CPA. I left the corporate world, and now I'm in the non-profit arena. That's — and, you know, your comments about Bud Light, I'll take it, it's cash. I'm sorry. But it's got to be structured in the right manner. The organization can't prostitute itself; and, again, I would preferably like it to be matched by Bank of America, by other organizations, the law firms, the newspapers.

Our other parts of our programs just briefly, I run a program for elementary-age children, Say Yes. It's funded by Shell Oil, 35,000. It tries to provide advanced math, science and technology skills for five-year-olds through the sixth grade. Then, at the high school level, obviously we're doing that. We're now doing a mentoring program for the Sanchez at-risk students, the elementary-age children. That's even a model, the Value Youth Program. We just instituted that in Houston for the first time.

The other aspect, we do the TRIO Program, talent search, trying to get financial aid for seniors going to college. We've raised about 4,000,000 over the last 10 years for high school students.

The final aspect of that is the literacy program. Your comments via the SLIAG, I'm in danger of losing $200,000. I have a thousand immigrants that come weekly to our school; and so, yes, it's a tremendous concern, but you can see there it's a very well structured program. It starts from the five-year-old to a 67-year-old, Abuelita, that we're helping with literacy services.

And so it can be effective. Understand, we've been doing this for 23 years, and we've finally gotten there, and the financial side is the most difficult part. I do JTPA. I've got the district. I get it from anywhere I can get it, because cash has to pay a teacher's salary. And, understand, the financial part is the hardest part, and I sympathize with the groups here that are trying to do things.

My question real quickly is in relation to —you know, our organization is doing a lot. I think we're generating a lot of research data, and we're not able to be an effective policy type of thing. You know, the data that's being generated from our drop-outs, the data that's being generated from our elementary-age school children, how do community-based organizations begin to incorporate that research mode? How do we find the funding? How do we effect major change, because obviously we're only dealing with some of the students? How do we deal with the district, because the district is where the impact has got to be? Houston is now 50 percent of the district, and I know it's probably even higher as I'm quoting, and our kids are at risk.

The bottom line that comes is that all the demographics — I tell people, Americans, "Who's going to pay your Social Security taxes for the Moya (phonetic) peoples and these little Chicanitos (phonetic) right now?" And we've got to do something to help them. Thank you.

The Audience: Who can address the research issue?

Ms. Pena: Anybody care to address the research issue?

Mr. Delgado: I'll bypass the Bud Light comment or we'll be here all day. I think there has to be a partnership with the university, and an equal partnership. By no means are we going to come in and say, "We're going to give you legitimacy," because we're going to take that data and we're going to publish it and we're going to give you access.

The big mistake of our — once we get the data on the university, we run, and to try to catch up with us, it's very difficult to catch up with us. But there is a partnership that can be worked out here, because we have needs for access, which we don't have access, but you've got access and you may need some of the technology that we have to offer, and the access at the other end.

I've got certain needs, and I'm up front about them, and you've got certain needs, and you're up

> The first time I went to my house with a Stafford loan application in my hand, my mother almost fainted. She doesn't believe in getting into debt or owing back to America thousands of dollars, but I had to remind her that she taught me to finish what I start; and, if I'm a third year and I have one or two years to finish school, I'm going to do it no matter what, whichever way I have to.

front about it. I think some things can be worked out. I think we need a partnership between the two. I think universities should not be left off the hook where we just take the data and we run. I think it's something that we parlay from there.

But you take a look at funding cycles and you take a look at funding, on most funding around educational research, it's not going to go to a district. It's going to go to a university, and the first thing most funds look at is what is your access to the population. We can lie about it, and then once we get the money, we worry about it, but up front I think there is a partnership that we can work out as long as we're very sure about what is it I want in my university and what is it you want. I think it is possible.

...more and more of them are beginning to have a little line that say on requirements, it says "U.S. citizenship." Since when do you have to be a U.S. citizen to deserve a higher education scholarship?

You've got a lot of the schools in Houston that you will be able to tap. Now, that's a small process, because we talk a very different language, and there's a tremendous amount of discussion on both sides because we're used to controlling, to be quite honest. And you're saying that we're going to be co-equal. Somehow I can't even bring the words out.

Mr. Linares: Part of what I think needs to happen is that in some way the local community or community that is impacted needs to create its own mechanism of assessing its own approach, assessing its own reality, looking at the data that it's reflecting, looking at its own reality in the political context, in the economic context, in the social context, and creating a mechanism that sort of holds the universities, of which other institutions have to come in and play a role, accountable to what that assessment is, so that that becomes a tool of social, active action on the part of that community in the context of empowerment, and sometimes institutes that look at data and look at how the community can exert itself, and becomes a guiding force for that community itself. It has to be an institute or a mechanism that the community drives in response to the community.

As a Dominican American, the first elected to office, in New York City there is now — we're beginning to take steps to establish a Dominican Historic Institute as part of the CUNY (phonetic) system, and it's precisely with that in mind. We want to look at the circumstances impacting our community, the numbers. We want to look at it politically in the process of action. We want to look at it economically. We want to look at it socially, and we want it to define what the agenda is going to be and how we want those resources to be used or hold whoever it is accountable.

It's a process that is emerging from the community itself, an accountability process, and I think that that's an approach that, I think, can be effective.

Ms. Pena: Okay. Thank you very much. I know that Dr. Ortiz wants to say something.

Dr. Ortiz: I only wanted to share our experience concerning that issue. We have a history of over 10 different partnerships with corporations, institutions of higher education, the Puerto Rico Department of Education, and these cover through the whole process of assistance of these partnerships, that we have gained a lot of knowledge through data, through research.

So what we see is that an institution created an organism for discussion of public issues, and that is the Institute of Public Policy. What we do when we gather that information, when we get research from community-based research, we disclose that information with legislators, policy makers, and we try — and we have been very effective in effecting legislation for schools, for universities, and for communities.

So the leadership will come from higher education institutions.

Ms. Pena: Okay. Thank you very much. I have been told that we have to begin leaving at 11:15. I know I told you 11:30, but I misunderstood. Eleven-thirty is the time that we have to get everybody on the buses and heading over to the hotel. So we have a schedule that we have to keep up with, and I hope everybody can please be as brief as possible because there are quite a few more people that want to say something. But I know that Emilio wants to say something as well.

Mr. Fox: I just wanted to bring it back to the operation of a system, where the rubber meets the road, so to speak. I find that a dramatic example that you can say with so much satisfaction, and I see it, we finally got this going right after 23 years, but I'm always out there hustling for the buck, and I'll take the Bud if that's where the dollars come from.

And that gives me — you know, the up side of that is that it can work. It gives me a goal. The down side is that, as a school system, we've got three or four models now that we're tinkering with in their third year, in their second year. We call them drop-out prevention. We call them service integration.

But you've given me a goal, a 23-year comfort level goal. At the same time, I know that the struggle for resources is never ending. So that's just the fact that it's a dramatic example of not only the continuing struggle, but also the fact that there are some victories out there.

Mr. Moreno: Let me just say I will leave some news items here, and they can show you how our programs work.

The Audience: My name is Ramondo Alcosta (phonetic). I'm a first deputy commissioner of human rights in the City of New York. I'm here with Commissioner Dan Celeon (phonetic). It's too bad that some of the students left, because there was a statement that was made earlier regarding the restriction of loans by lending institutions to only U.S. citizens.

I just wanted to point out that in New York City, since July of '89 when the human rights rules were amended to include immigrant citizenship status — that resulted from a lot of the IRCA litigation that you

pointed out earlier, you should know that lending institutions in New York City are prohibited from limiting their loans to U.S. citizens. They're classified as public accommodations and they do come within the gambit of the city's human rights law.

And I urge leaders and legislators to push to amend whatever city ordinances there are, anti-discrimination ordinances there are, because I believe New York City is one of now two jurisdictions that include that immigration citizenship status protection. It is crucial, as it was pointed out earlier.

The Audience: My name is Jose Ortiz, and I'm an attorney from New York City, and I think there's one point that I haven't heard much talk about. We're talking now about the money. And, that is, I have two cousins who won scholarships to study at private prep schools, and the problem that they had was they didn't feel like they were being accepted in the school, and then when they came back to the community, the community didn't want to accept them either. We're talking about the South Bronx in New York City and the stress that they went through and the stress that went through on the family, where it took its time to get the message through to them.

I think that's one point that I haven't heard being spoken to today.

...our cornerstone educational program is the George I. Sanchez High School. It's a private academic, fully accredited school run by AAMA, a community-based organization, one of the only ones of its kind in the country. In November, we'll celebrate 20 years. We have 230 students there, all former drop-outs.

Ms. Pena: Anybody care to answer that, respond to that? All right. I think this woman. We haven't heard from a woman in a long time.

The Audience: My name is Celia Gilluiard from Chicago. I work for the Family Resource Coalition, and I'm a graduate student at the University of Chicago, School of Public Policy.

I have a question about parent involvement for Magdalena Lewis and Melvin Delgado. I was wondering what in your opinions are the cultural and societal barriers that prevent our parents from getting involved in the schools, and what can we do to break these systems down?

Ms. Lewis: As I said at the beginning, our organization has — we have a program to work with Hispanic parents to participate in education of the children; and, yes, there are many, many barriers to parental involvement: from cultural, logistical issues, language, school issues, school-related issues and, also, issues related to the community itself.

Language is one of the major barriers for parental involvement. The cultural differences between the home and the school, misconceptions and misperceptions between parents, children also and the teachers, are a tremendous barrier. Teachers a lot of time think that Hispanic parents don't care about the children's education, and that is a tremendous misconception about Hispanic parents. On the other hand, parents think that the school don't care about them, and I think the school cares.

...there is a partnership that can be worked out here, because we have needs for access, which we don't have access, but you've got access and you may need some of the technology that we have to offer, and the access at the other end.

What happens is that neither one knows how to show it and doesn't know how to do it. The schools don't know how to attract parents, Hispanic parents. They're trying to use the same ways that they are using to attract mainstream parents, and it doesn't work.

Do you want to say something? Because I have more to say.

Mr. Delgado: What I found is that bilingual education programs, they have no problems at all attracting parents. I've got teachers, when the parent drops the kid off, they grab the parent in and they get them involved with the educational process. So that, if a parent wants to be involved, they can be involved. The appropriate level is there.

Now we've got other programs where basically you're supposed to drop your kid off and come back at three o'clock and pick your kid up, and obviously you're not the expert here. I'm the expert. So, when parents are picking up — the point which I'm targeting is sometimes they're welcome and sometimes they're not; but, when they are welcome, they're a tremendous resource, because I've got parents that come in. You go into a conference, we've got eight parents in there, washing the blackboard, helping the kids' tutor, and you've got those who want to be involved as long as they feel that they can be involved.

But, when they're not involved, their perceptions are very accurate; and, that is, we don't want them involved. And then we assume that by sending a notice home once or twice a year, that you can attract parents. It doesn't work that way.

Ms. Pena: Okay. Thank you very much. We're getting close to wrapping up here, folks.

The Audience: Good morning, and thank you for allowing me to speak. My name is Ignacio Pena (phonetic). I'm the first elected Latino at the Compton Community College in California. I'm a true supporter and believer of parent involvement, and I support everything that has been said without a doubt, because, otherwise, it's just talking.

I have more things to say, but I'm just going to wrap it up, I guess, from my perspective. I ask for this Congressional Hispanic Caucus to address some

of these issues even stronger than how they might have been addressed up to now in the hemispheres where financial and political actions are made on the basis that these concerns are universal being presented here, but validated by any concerned parent of any race in the future of the children and family.

In looking at all of these issues, to bring Hispanics together instead of separating us, I hope that there may be someone on the panel writing down a list of these general concerns to be presented as goals out of this first educational institute workshop to see what accomplishments take place before we meet again in 12 months. Thank you.

Ms. Pena: We have one more over here.

The Audience: This is going to be just a comment. I recently came to Catholic University, though I am not representing Catholic University. Having 12 years in Florida working the inner cities, migrant workers, good parishes, suburban areas, through — over nine years, chaplain in the Air Force. I've been in California. I've been three years in Alaska, almost in all the country. I tell you, it's beautiful, first of all, to give you a compliment.

We're talking about responsibility, community. Support is beautiful. I think that they need a compliment. Really, you are beautiful. But we know that our people have a lot of problems. We have to be in touch with reality. We need to be in touch with our people, to encourage them to get involved politically, economic, social involvement, to be there with them, to love them and to be careful and to be strong supporters of the public school systems as well as the private school systems and give the opportunity to the people and meet that up front.

So, again, thank you for the beautiful —thank you.

> ...I have two cousins who won scholarships to study at private prep schools, and the problem that they had was they didn't feel like they were being accepted in the school, and then when they came back to the community, the community didn't want to accept them either.

Ms. Pena: Okay. We actually have one more, and I'm going to ask him to be as brief as possible.

The Audience: This is just a question. My name is Dennis Deleon (phonetic). In the challenge of bilingual education — my mother is a bilingual education teacher in Long Beach, California, and one of the things she tells me and I see happening in New York City also where I work now is that the challenge is not just bilingual; the challenge is that there are many, many language groups that are entering the schools, that a lot of the curriculum, a lot of the organizational structure is not adapted to accommodate that, the multi-language capacity in schools.

And, two questions: Number one, are steps being made to expand the organization and the kind of leadership to encompass a multi-language approach; and, number two, are coalitions being formed in any areas between Latinos, communities that require bilingual services and the new communities, the Chinese in New York, the ERKAs, the variety of other groups? Are either of those things happening?

> . . . I think we have to redefine voting age, because as long as children, kids, up until 18 are not allowed to vote, they're an invisible majority.

Ms. Quezada: I think probably one of — the L.A. School District is probably the most complex in terms of many languages. We have — of our 640,000 K-12 students, we have 280,000 that are limited English speaking. Can you imagine that? Two hundred and eighty thousand children come to school and need an education in another language other than English.

Now, to make things worse, 90 percent of them, 260,000, speak Spanish. Ninety percent speak one language, Spanish. Ten percent speak 90 languages. Our first language is English, 39 percent. Our second language is Spanish. Our third language is Armenian. Fourth language is Korean.

And so you can see that 90 percent of our problem is Spanish. So, definitely, bilingual education is the order of the day in many of our schools; however, in central Los Angeles, in Hollywood for example, you can go into any one classroom and in that one classroom there are 15 to 20 languages.

So how do we approach them? We don't approach them with bilingual education. We approach them with using English as the language to develop understanding the knowledge of subject matter. It is, however, much, much more challenging; and, unfortunately, we don't have yet the resources, the curriculum, the methodology, and the time to train our teachers in those languages, but there are huge efforts, huge efforts being made by our teachers, in fact, to get the training that will allow them to teach children in a classroom that has 16, 17, 18 or 20 languages. It is, in fact, a huge challenge.

We also have the challenges of our communities. The Korean community, for example, does not want to have — in many of our parent communities, they don't want bilingual education. They want English instruction.

So there are many efforts, but I think we are still in the infancy stage of understanding how this works best, both with our parents and with our students in the classroom.

Ms. Pena: Okay. Thank you all so very much for coming to the panel discussion. It has been lively, and I'm sure we've learned a lot.

There is one thing I would like to say, however, before we take off and I leave in the minds of all of us. Tomorrow is Electronic Town Meeting. It's a two-way video conference, and there will be over 200 people involved in each of six cities across the nation. So that starts tomorrow at one o'clock. Thank you all so very much.

Session #4
Access to Health Care

Moderator:

Marco A. Grimaldo
Clearinghouse
Coordinator, CHCI

Friday, October 1 **PROCEEDINGS**

9:00 am - 11:30 am Rayburn House Office Building

Presenters:

Fernando Torres-Gil
Assistant Secretary for Aging
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Luis Estevez
Morrisania Health Center
Bronx, New York

Ileana Herrell
Associate Administrator for Minority Health, Health Resources and Services Administration, U.S. Public Health Service

Cesar Perales
Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services
New York City

Josefina Carbonell
Founder, Little Havana Activities and Nutrition Center of Dade County, Florida

Adolph P. Falcon
Vice President for Policy and Research for The National Coalition of Hispanic Health and Human Services Organizations (COSSMHO)

Congressional Member:

The Honorable Ed Pastor, D-AZ

Moderator: Thank you for joining on our health care panel.

We have a distinguished panel here this morning. We hope that we will be joined by others periodically as the morning continues.

I'd like to begin by introducing Congressman Ed Pastor, Arizona. Congressman.

Adolph Falcon, who is with the National Coalition of Hispanic Health and Human Services Organization.

Josefina Carbonell, who is with the Little Havana Neighborhood Health and Nutrition Centers. I'm sorry.

And, Dr. Luis Estevez, who is with the Morrisania Health Center in South Bronx in New York.

Also, joining us is the Assistant Secretary for Aging, Dr. Fernando Torres-Gil. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for joining us this morning.

I would like to begin this panel by posing a question to the participants and asking you each to respond from your own perspective and how you view access to health care for the Latino-Hispanic community in the United States.

The question I would like to pose to you is given the variety of proposals that are currently before Congress and in the general health care debate, what are those issues that access that particularly would be important for the Latino community that we address and could come together on and how can we best do that?

I'd like to hear from Congressman Pastor, if he would like to address this issue, that we speak to this for about five or ten minutes. We will go down the row of panelists, and, then we will answer questions from the audience and hope that the panelists can engage in some discussion and debate on the issue.

I should make a note at this point that we will try and keep this panel as close to the ending time of 11:30 as possible. We will be having Attorney General, Janet Reno, speaking at luncheon today, and it's important that we attend that conference. And with that I begin with Congressman Pastor.

Congressman Pastor: Thank you. Good morning. Yesterday, when we talked about the cultural diversity, Dr. Pinal, from the Census Bureau, told us that the population that is greatly under-served in terms of having access to the many services for having health care is the Hispanic community, because either we're underemployed, unemployed, and don't have access to health care.

If you look at the various proposals, the one I really don't know much about is the Republican one, so I can't talk to that, because I haven't spend much time in reviewing that. If you look at managed competition that was around, the problem may be that even though, it will improve, probably in service to the Hispanic community, it may be the program that may have greatest slippage.

If you look at our community, the objective of managed competition is to provide health care at a lower cost, and, so, anytime you try to do that, you try to give people in your system that are not chronic ill and provide the least risk.

> One of the problems that I see is, even though you have a health card, what good does it do you if you can't go and see the doctor or nurse or a third facility to take care of you?

Like, yesterday you heard a young man from Houston tell you that in Houston the population that has been growing in the number of AIDS-infection is in the Hispanic communities. And that's probably true throughout this country, throughout the Hispanic communities.

The AIDS-infection is probably a greater percentage in the population. While, if you're objective, in managed competition is to have full cost, but it's done through serving people who are relatively healthy, then there may be a greater opportunity for slipping

because of the reduced deductions on the carriers. I mean, the providers, who provide health care to the population. The single payers in subjecting this, occur over the universe, and, so, in that particular system we have greater access.

The Clinton proposal, and we know one of its key features is that it would be universal, meaning that everyone except for undocumented, unemployed people would have access to the system. So whether or not you're a high risk or you have preexisting conditions, the Clinton plan is to serve everyone and to be universal to all of us.

So, even single payers, or the Clinton proposal, would probably give us the greater access in terms of Hispanic communities.

That's one issue, but let's see that we have a system that give universal health care to everyone. The whole universe is covered.

One of the problems that I see is, even though you have a health card, what good does it do you if you can't go and see the doctor or nurse or a third facility to take care of you? I think that's one of the big problems we have is that we have in our communities, whether we're urban or rural. And in Hispanic communities that are heavily concentrated, you don't have the infrastructure that can provide the medical services, or you may have universal access, but, then, you're going to have to be able to take advantage of it, because you don't have the ability to get the services out of it you required.

So access to issue one already covered by the system, and you are covered by the system, — the service that you need. So I believe that except for managed competition, which will be better than where we're at today, in view of simple care or greater access. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you, Congressman Pastor. I do want to take this opportunity to recognize two of our other panelists who were not introduced at the time.

Dr. Ileana Herrell, who is with the Office of Minority Health, and also Dr. Carolina Reyes, who is here with us. She is caring for five-month old Clarisa at the moment, so she will be taking care of her.

Congressman Pastor: Well, being a Congressman in bond, I'll help you take care of the baby.

Moderator: Thank you, Congressman.

Congressman Pastor: I've had a lot of practice with it.

Moderator: As we continue, I'd like to take this opportunity to extend a welcome to Adolph Falcon. Mr. Falcon is the Vice President for Policy and Research for the National Coalition of Hispanic Health and Human Service Organizations. He offers a strong grasp of the policy initiatives which are proposed, as well as a potential impact on Latino community. Mr. Falcon.

Mr. Falcon: I guess responding to the question about what the access concerns are in the Clinton health plans, let's single out what the most troubling issue that we hear about under all health plans.

This whole discussion has come up about who is a real American and, therefore, deserving of health care services. It's a very troubling trend that's come out in the health reform debate, and it's really seemed to have spread to a number of public services issues.

This whole discussion has come up about who is a real American and, therefore, deserving of health care services. It's a very troubling trend that's come out in the health reform debate, and it's really seemed to have spread to a number of public services issues. And it's one thing Congressman Pastor addressed just now, and addressed very strongly by our leadership.

For instance, I'll just mention undocumented and whether or not they're really deserving of health care services. I don't think you really can spread it to what undocumented workers have done in this country and the dignity of their labor. And that has to be recognized.

In addition to proposals to exclude undocumented from health reform plans just don't make a practical sense. In a time when we're looking at reinventing government and reducing bureaucracy and looking to create savings in health care, we're talking about, in a number of health reform plans, about creating a whole bureaucracy simply designed to screen out the undocumented.

We're talking about screening a hundred percent of services to reach a population that's less than two percent of the population. That's one large bureaucracy and one that does not need to be reformed. We have enough barriers to care in the Hispanic community. It's ridiculous to create a new one.

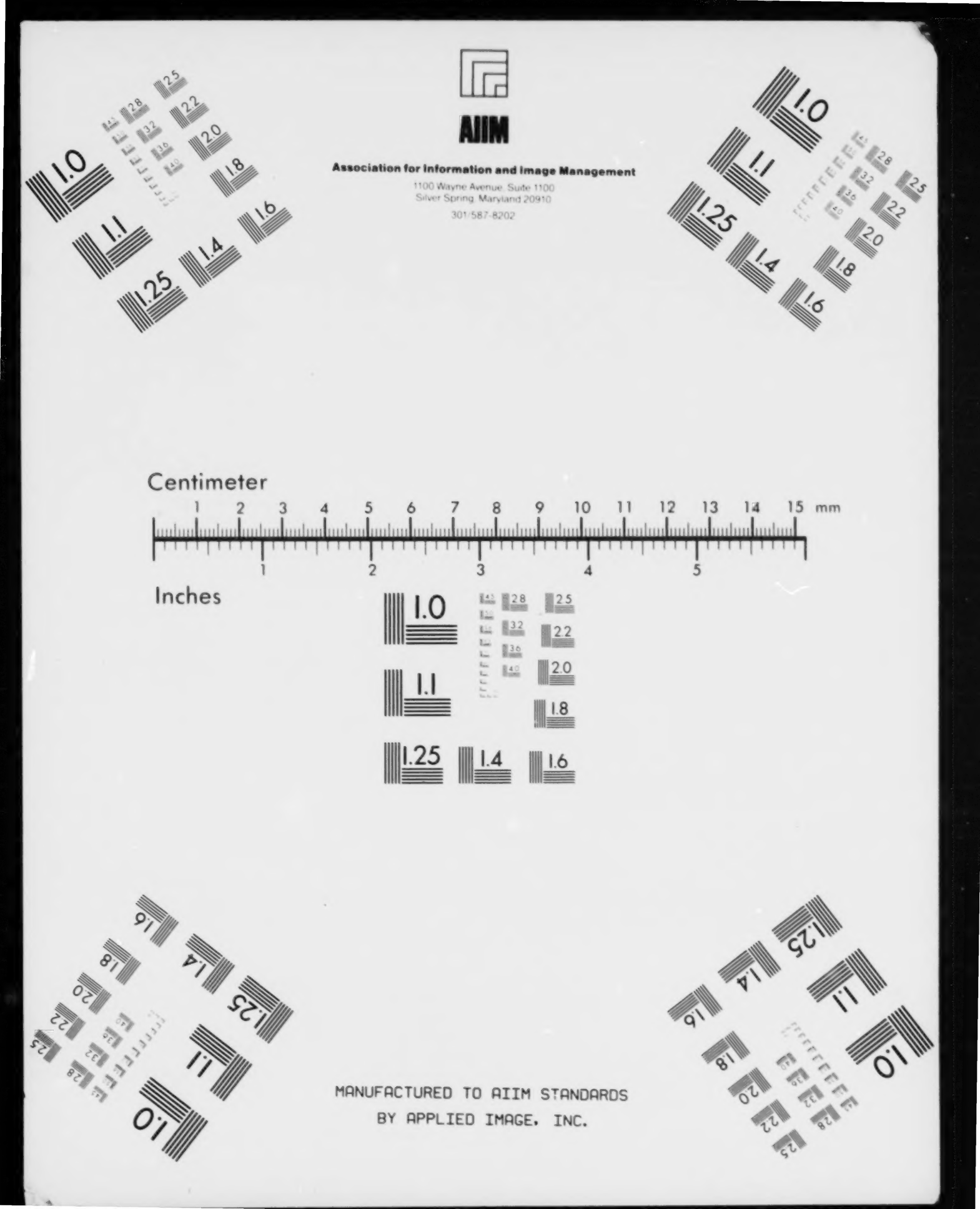
Also, I'm very concerned about the discussion of who's a real American and deserving health care services, because that has an impact just not on the undocumented population of our community, but the community as a whole.

We saw it under the Immigration Reform and Control Act. Employer sanctions under the Immigration Reform and Control Act created a pattern of discrimination as found by the General Accounting Office against legal Hispanic residents and citizens.

And, I would put forth to you that if we're going to single out a single group, the undocumented, to be screened out of our health care system, when any Hispanic person goes to receive services or request services from the health care system, they're going to be scrutinized a lot more than any other person would be. And it's going to result in a pattern of discrimination against our communities. And that's something we have to be very concerned about.

Finally, it just doesn't make public health sense. In public health system, you serve everybody who is a resident in that community. It's similar to situation that you have with the fire fighters. When there's a fire, a fire fighter doesn't go to a building and ask first, you know, who's documented and who's not undocumented here and leave all the undocumented in the building. They go in, they put out the fire, and they save the people.

But we have public health fires in our communities. We have tuberculosis; we have measles; we have AIDS. These are all public health fires which need to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be addressed. And those are not illnesses or diseases that ask your citizenship status or your documentation status. They need to be addressed in the system.

Along similar lines of who's a real American, I've been particularly disturbed by the discussion of Puerto Rico, and the flavor that has been coming out of that. We're talking in all of our health plans about, at least, covering all citizens. Yet, when we get to Puerto Rico, we seem to forget that those folks are citizens of the United States.

And, we're talking about providing them services, but perhaps not the same level of services as we provide to the rest of the citizens of the United States. That's creating two classes of citizenship and it's unacceptable. And I think that's something for our leadership to address.

In addition to that issue, I think there's two other issues we have to be aware of as we look at health reform plans. One is the whole issue of creating national and state and local budgets for health care. On the surface, it looks like a reasonable thing to do and a way for us to start controlling costs, which is a goal of all of us.

But we have to be careful with that because of where we are in the health care system. One-third of our community does not have access to health care or health insurance. So we're going to create national budgets, and state and local budgets, based on our existing health care system. What that does essentially is freeze out our community, because it's going to be based on health services from every data. And it doesn't account for providing services to one-third of our community.

And we simply don't have the data and the models to know what health services will look like if we start providing services to that one-third of our population.

And, setting budgets right now, at the national level, and, particularly, at the state and local level, I think it's simply bad of a policy, because we will be freezing out segments of the population that aren't in the system right now.

I think a third issue that we have to be concerned with is the issue of formularies. Those are the system set up by states which say to physicians and hospitals that these are the drugs you can prescribe for certain ailments and conditions.

On the surface again, it seems like a reasonable idea. The problem, once again, is that we really don't have the information about how specific pharmaceutical and drugs perform in different populations. What information we do have says that among racial and ethnic communities, particularly among Chinese and Asian-American and among Hispanic communities, different drugs are metabolized in different ways and have different effects on us.

I recently had an experience with formularies. A friend of mine who was in the hospital with a heart attack, and she's half Chinese, half Cuban. And we repeated and told doctors that she could not take aspirin; she could not metabolize aspirin. It would upset her stomach, and the only drug she could take was something called Aprem (phonetic).

What ended up happening is that their substitute for Aprem was not on the formulary of this specific hospital. When she was given their substitute for Aprem, which was baby aspirin, it upset her stomach and caused her not to be able to eat for two days after a heart attack and significantly weakened her condition, and brought her to current state, simply because the hospital was being penny-wise and pound foolish. But they provided her a nine-cent drug instead of providing her a 17-cent drug. Because of those few pennies of savings, she had two days with not being able to eat after a serious condition of a heart attack.

And, I would put you, that's going to happen more and more in our communities because we simply have different experiences with different drugs. We have to ensure that when our physicians treat our communities, they are able to make the choice of drug most appropriate for their patient and not for a general population sample.

The information we have on drugs is essentially based on middle-aged, White males. I put forward to you that when I went to the hospital with an elderly woman, who was half Chinese and have Cuban, the information they filled that formulary on, did not apply to her. And we have to be very careful with this whole obsession of formulation with SME for our communities.

I think those are three of the main issues we have to look at and anticipate on.

Moderator: Thank you. Now, I would like to turn the microphone to Josefina Carbonell. Ms. Carbonell is the President of the Little Havana Activities, Nutrition Centers of Dade County. Got it right that time.

Ms. Carbonell oversees several multi-service community centers and will speak to us from a perspective of working with the elderly and from the neighborhood health perspective. Thank you.

Ms. Carbonell: Good morning everyone. On the community perspective, I think it enforces the unique opportunity and threshold to put forth some crucial issues that are affecting our communities and our neighborhood.

Specifically, I'll speak on the perspective that because have the oldest Hispanic population in the nation, Cuban-American, we are 20 to 25 years of what the rest of the Hispanic older community will look like in the rest of the entire United States and Puerto Rico.

So, on that perspective, I have three crucial issues that I try to attest some of the health care reform proposals by and those are information and education. Is critical information and education, processes in

And, I would put forth to you that if we're going to single out a single group, the undocumented, to be screened out of our health care system, when any Hispanic person goes to receive services or request services from the health care system, they're going to be scrutinized a lot more than any other person would be.

outreach are going to be available to inform our communities.

For instance, I was just talking to some of the panelists before. You cannot imagine the kind of panic that is going through the ranks in our elderly population in South Florida because of the proposed Medicare cuts in Medicaid, which many, if not all, of our seniors are dependent on just Medicare. They can't even afford Medicare co-payment.

..we're going to create national budgets, and state and local budgets, based on our existing health care system. What that does essentially is freeze out our community...

So, I think that the information and education issue on the outreach to at-risk populations, such as Hispanics, is going to be critical, inasmuch as the health care reform debate develops. So I think that is one crucial area that I'm very concerned about.

Second, I think, is the lack of Hispanic representation in the health care field. We look over all of the national figures, and it appears Hispanics are about two-percent represented in the health care field. So, the concern of access, if it goes into who is providing the care for those individuals in the health care arena and that we see that the lack of representation, Hispanic representation in health care, determines the actual cultural provision of services, and, then, lack of cultural representation in the health care field in the provision of services.

The other component that I'm very concerned about is the lack of community intercultural, neighborhood entry points. And that goes back to whatever plan you look at, whether you look at the single payer, the managed competition which we are very much experienced with in South Florida.

And, although, that wasn't meant, many of our people are able to afford health care coverage through a managed competition or agent, along with social HMO, we still see a lot of abuses and a lot of lack of access to appropriate care, whether it be in medication, appropriate medication that needs to be taken.

Adolph was talking about formularies. There is currently existing some kind of caps and formulary for those individuals under an HMO, social, Medicaid, HMO programs, in which it caps the kind of restrictions that are given to these individuals. And are they appropriate? And, in many instances, they are not.

The other thing on the lack of entry points, the community entry points, is on President Clinton's plan. It seems to give the opportunity to have choices. Yet, it worries me on the Medicaid fees, on if you choose the plan you stay on, I guess, what number will bill this whole thing. I need feedback on that.

You will choose either the average programs that will be available at no costs or less, right? And, if you want added services or an added plan, you would have to pay for it.

Currently, Medicaid, we don't — you're looking at the perspective of where we are right now. We are under-represented; we are under-covered; and we lack appropriate access to health care. So it worries me tremendously. And, when we move forward, we will have, at least, an input to make sure that we have at least adequate. And, that we start at some kind of zero ground, which we're not. We are under zero right now.

So that is one of the choices. Under managed competition, we've seen Florida uproared, at least the seniors uproared, with Hispanic competition, inasmuch as there's a whole big movement going on in Florida to provide to legislate the managed care on bondsmen council to be set up in the state to represent those individuals that are under a managed care approach.

Those are things and abuses in lack of access. So I — although a managed competition and the choice issues, there on the current administration plan, we still need to look at the lack of individual choice in many instances, when we're required, on that kind of scenario.

Moderator: Thank you very much. Well, I think you can hear me anyway. I'll speak up. And we'll do without the microphone.

Next, I'd like to introduce Dr. Ileana Herrell, who is the Associate Administrator of the Office of Minority Health within the Health Services Administration, the Department of Health and Human Services. The Office of Minority Health, as I understand it, if I am correct — please correct me if I'm not — has a mandate for operating programs and demonstration projects for other entities within the Department of Health and Human Services. And we're parting with them towards minority community.

Dr. Herrell: Muy buenas dias. As indicated earlier, I am the Associate Administrator for Minority Health at the Health Resources and Services Administration, one of the sister public health service agencies. And, HRSA, since no — is not, in our communities, not as well known, for example, as CDC, NIH, or ACAR. But those are other sister agencies that also have offices of minority health.

We have to ensure that when our physicians treat our communities, they are able to make the choice of drug most appropriate for their patient and not for a general population sample.

And, as such, we also direct, in addition to the associate directors, are administrators, the founders of those offices.

What I would like to do this morning is to address an issue that still remains to be looked at, because it will involve our communities. And the preceding panelists have done an outstanding job of presenting to you some of the concerns that may be and that still remain relevant to the provisional services to the

Hispanic community.

And what I would like to do is I would like to make a very short presentation of what I see as issues that still need to be addressed and can still be addressed by our communities.

One of them is the group effect, such as, for example, we all like to talk about group categories. So we talk about Hispanics. Though, when we're going to look at the Hispanic community, we're looking at a compulsory, at an aggregate of some ethnic groups, that constitute what is known as Hispanics.

And as such we have to be cognizant that the similarities and the differences are there. And, in health services, delivery control this. This need to be looked at.

And, for example, there is more similarity between a Mexican-American and a Puerto Rican, who live in New York City, than there is between a Mexican-American who has lived in New York City for 10 years and a Mexican-American in Los Angeles or San Antonio or Houston, especially, if they live within the same communities.

So what does that mean? That means there is something called a group effect, that based on the geographic location of our Hispanic population groups, there will be conditions that are very, very particular to those communities. In terms of program planning, access to services, we need to look at those potential effects.

In addition to that, we also need to constantly be reminded to remind ourselves that there are structural, as well as cultural and linguistic factors, that need to be taken into account when it comes to access to health care.

And, as such, we, you know, we, in addition to the group effects, we are going to have to be used in disentangling the structural, the cultural, and the linguistic factors. We need to be begin to look at ways in which we can make more accessible, culturally, the services that will be made available.

But how does that translate into reality? Well, if every practical issue will be, if when people receive a card, they will need to understand what that card means, and what it's uses will be.

And, I would like to use a personal anecdote to explain that, because my father is currently 83 years old. And he, about 10 years ago, when he was in his seventies, had the bright idea that because his government, his military I.D. card — he's retired —would bend when he sat on his wallet, he would take advantage of this new technique that metalizes documents, keeping them from bending.

So, he went in, and, fortunately for him, he couldn't have his military I.D. card, because it was two-sided, put into this metal clock. But he had his social security and his Medicaid cards. And, when he went to the hospital, they would not accept them. And, so, I had to fly down to Puerto Rico to disentangle the situation he, himself, had created, because of a lack of understanding of how one uses these things. So, just identification cards are plastic cards.

We also need to look at geographic mobility in the sense that, in general, some of our population groups tend to be mobile. They move from family location to family location as the condition arises.

And, there will have to be a built-in mechanism, so that people understand, not only the portability of the services or their right to receive services, but also how to access those services once they move. Because if they're moving from a geographic location, let's say like in Miami, in Dade County, where there is likely to be a larger number of Spanish-language services, to an area, such as, maybe, Portland, Oregon, or Seattle, Washington, where the services may not as available in those languages.

We will need to prepare our population groups so that they don't become frustrated and don't give up on the system.

We look over all of the national figures, and it appears Hispanics are about two-percent represented in the health care field.

It is also important that we look at the degree of integration in our communities. We need to make sure that all levels of our culturation are covered when we begin to advertise and to try to bring people into the systems.

We need to still remain cognizant of the fact that a first generation Hispanic or a newly-arrived immigrant is not the same as a third, fourth, or fifth generation Latino. And so these are some of the issues that are going to have to be used in looking at how we can best breech the entry gaps that will be there when our population groups begin to seek these services.

Finally, I also want to point out two other issues that we should continue to look at. Being a behavioral scientist by training, I wouldn't be myself, I wouldn't be me, if I didn't talk about the psychosocial and the behavioral issues that we also need to address.

In looking at the emphasis on preventive services, we also have to understand that the reality of our lives, because of who we are, because of our adaptation, and because of our levels of our culturation.

We still tend to be in the here and the now. And to talk about health promotion and preventive services to a population group that still primarily feels that fate plays a large part in what happens in our lives is going to be a hurdle that will have to be overcome when it comes to providing services to our population groups.

And, last, but not least, we need to look at generational differences and we're already heard some of that fear expressed, as well as community-based interventions that are much more dynamic than the ones you would use with a predominantly White-Anglo population.

And, we also need to look at the secondary things, at some of the diseases that are not considered within the clinical framework, such as poverty and violence, have opposed upon our communities. Thank you very much.

Moderator: Thank you very much. I, too, would

like to take this opportunity if I could to interrupt our progression here, and give the Assistant Secretary the opportunity of speaking next. One reason, I know he does have a time constraint. Assistant Secretary for Aging.

Dr. Torres-Gil: Thank you, thank you very much. Actually, Josefina, you talked about the issue of formularies. We're having a meeting with the Secretary to go over the finer details of the prescription drug benefit. And, one of the points you've raised, I will be sure to raise with her. We're going to be discussing that at great length with the White House Staff.

So, that's kind of a good opening comment, to say that the health care plan, which all of us are deeply interested and uncertain about certain aspects, is a clinical opportunity for all of us both to try to influence it and shape it, both, now, as it goes through its various iterations, and it will result in a bill by the middle of October to the Congress. And then certainly as it goes through the legislative process.

My focus is to speak about Latino elders, but I'd also like to speak about a person with disability in the Latino community and how the health care plan relates to those populations.

Let me just point out what Josefina mentioned that two trends are affecting the Latino community throughout this country. They include both the aging of our population and growing levels of disability in our population, which is all to say that all of us, God willing, will be older persons. And most of us are at risk of a disability at some point, whether it's acute or a chronic or an accident; so therefore, we certainly should be concerned about how we're going to address issues of older persons and the disabled.

Let me get right to the issue of the plan and just address some of the points that have been made. For the Latino community as oppresses, I mean, all of us who have been involved in this field and certainly, Josefina, have argued for years and advocated for years to have a system of home and community-based programs available to our elders and those with chronic disability.

... you're looking at the perspective of where we are right now. We are under-represented; we are under-covered; and we lack appropriate access to health care. So it worries me tremendously.

Because, up to this point in time, the only public health benefit for persons in those categories, or facing those circumstances, was nursing homes through the Medicaid program which required not only spending down, impoverishing yourself, but nursing homes that are not only alien to most older persons, but especially to the Latino community where the elder, more than African-Americans or Whites or even other immigrant groups, still want to be part of the family and the community.

Even if they're not living in the same home, they want to have that level of interaction. And the nursing home and the Medicaid program pretty well cuts you off, which is probably one reason we have a smaller proportion of Latino elders in nursing homes as other populations.

The proposed health care plan, the President's plan, for the first time is going to move us down the road to developing home and community-based systems, that is, long-term care. And, for the first time, it's also going to provide a very important coverage for prescription drug benefits.

We also need to look at geographic mobility in the sense that, in general, some of our population groups tend to be mobile.

The high cost of prescription drugs is perhaps now the single greatest out-of-pocket expense for elders, and certainly for Latino elders, who tend to have lower incomes. So, to the extent we can address that, it's a major benefit.

But let me talk about the long-term care piece. This is going to be a separate program apart from the basic benefit package of the health care alliances, which will provide home and community-based services. And the specific benefit will be dictated by the states. It could range from respite care acute, adult day care, home health care. It can include technology assistance, even transportation, rehabilitation, even meals, home-delivered meals. It's a pretty wide latitude, that the states have, in determining what will constitute home and community-based care.

The only specific requirement is that the home and community-based care have personal assistants which is very important for a person with disability. However, this package is a state capitated program. Federal monies, approximately, 75 to 80 percent federal share will go straight to the states, and therefore — and, then, they, through their alliances, will decide what will be part of that package.

Therefore, it's real critical, not just for this benefit, but for the whole concept of health alliances at the state level, that Latinos have representation, input and connection at the state level with their legislature and with their governor.

This is going to be a real critical piece because that's where much of the power will lie, not just in terms of long-term care, but all health benefits, although there is a proposed national review board that will provide a lot of the guidance.

Now, this long-term care program, however, is a — has a new feature. No longer will it be based on age or income. All persons will qualify regardless of age or income. The criteria will be functional ability as measured by activities of daily living, which means are you able to bathe, are you able to dress, are you able to get out of bed, or unable to perform those kinds of activities of daily living. And it will require that you have at least three ADL's to qualify for this program.

There has been concern raised, both in the Congress and among other groups, that this may be a fairly severe test, that maybe it should be two ADL's, instead of three ADL's. Those issues will have to be sorted out.

But I think the point here is that it's going to be an

important benefit for the Latino elders and persons of disability notwithstanding the criteria, because it will give them an important benefit.

The prescription drug issue, I've already mentioned. There's a few other pieces that are a part of this very important piece. One is to reform the provision of long-term care insurance. My guess is that most of us in this audience are not expecting to get older just yet or to need long-term care.

And, if I ask right now, and I will, how many of us have long-term care insurance, my guess is that I might be one of the few. Let me ask. How many of us have long-term care insurance? Two people. And that's one of the real risks we face in this country, as we live longer and face increasing chances of a disability. And, if we don't qualify for those three ADL's, then someone has to pay for someone like a visiting nurse or a chore worker to come to your home.

Long-term care insurance will increasingly gain importance, and we have new requirements on long-term care insurance. They going to be very important to the Latino community.

One of the most important is that there is no preexisting medical condition to determine whether or not you qualify and that it be based on a community rating, so that the insurance companies don't continue to cream only the healthiest and those precisely who ultimately need it.

In addition, there's another critical benefit for Latinos, especially those between 55 and 65. This plan proposes to provide health care insurance for early retirees.

For many Latinos, especially men, who are forced to retire, the company downsizes, it goes bankrupt or whatever, if it happens before they are 65, they are either without health insurance, or they have to hope that the company will continue to pay for it. And most companies are decreasing or eliminating health care coverage for retirees. This proposal provides health insurance for those between 55 and 65 until they're eligible for the Medicare program, so real key pieces.

Let me very quickly, however, raise some of the concerns in addition to the ones that Josefina raised. Well, this is one of them. Medicare.

For, unfortunately, in the last few months, the media has portrayed the many different options in the President's health care plan related to Medicare and Medicaid as a series of cuts. And, not surprisingly and legitimately, Latino elders and senior citizens, in general, are very fearful that something's going to happen to the Medicare program to take away those critical benefits.

Now, for most older persons, and Latinos in particular, that is their basic medical and hospital coverage. That's where it comes from. It's not just important for Latino elders, it's important for their children.

My mother, for example, had to go in for intensive care a few years ago. Her bill was $24,000. And her children just about had a heart attack when the bill was given to us. And I told them not to worry. It's covered by Medicare. Your part is only, I think the deductible then, was $420, roughly.

And, I think I made out of my brothers and sisters, real believers in supporting these taxes that go into the Medicare program. So, it's important for all of us, because it means that us as children of older persons don't get stuck with this huge bill. So certainly we need to be concerned about how these issues are portrayed.

The reality is this. The President's plan proposes to use roughly $124 billion dollars in Medicare savings, which will accrue between the years 1994 and the year 2000, and redirect those savings solely towards expanded long-term care and prescription drug benefits. We are not portraying it as a cut. What it is, is reducing the increase in the reimbursement rates, which has been approximately 11 percent a year to doctors and hospitals, down to about six or seven percent, which simply means doctors and hospitals will get less of an increase in their reimbursement than they have received in the past. There will be no elimination of benefits whatsoever. So savings, which are accumulated over five years, are used to pay for the drug benefit, the long-term care benefit, as well as I should mention in the Medicaid program, we're going to increase the allowance for keeping assets from two thousand to twelve thousand and a monthly allowance from $30 to a hundred. So it pays for all of this.

However, there is still concern that maybe that is too much. And, I know that the Congress and the executive branch are discussing right now, what is the appropriate figure? Should it be a hundred billion, 80 billion, 124 billion.

...there is more similarity between a Mexican-American and a Puerto Rican, who live in New York City, than there is between a Mexican-American who has lived in New York City for 10 years and a Mexican-American in Los Angeles or San Antonio or Houston...

But, I think our job, or my job certainly, is to make it clear to seniors, as I do just about every day now when I speak, these are not cuts. These are redirecting savings in the program, and, also, to try to explain that the savings are in fact going to accrue, because a large proportion of Medicare benefits is warped. So that's now going to be covered through their employers.

All hospitals and doctors are going to get, like, 37 million more paying customers, and that's going to relieve the burden on doctors and hospitals to kind of rely on the Medicare program for much of their revenue. So that's a real savings. We are not certain exactly how much.

The other issue of managed care, and it is an important one, those in the Medicare program will have the option of going into a health care alliance and picking any one of the three plans, HMO, PPO, or fee for service, or staying in the Medicare program. And, in a few years, the Medicare program will have to provide several choices of managed care, HMO-type settings.

Many senior are not comfortable with HMO's because of the issues of access and bureaucracy. So

we're going to have to give great attention to how we address those issues.

But the other thing to know about the Medicare program is states will have the option of incorporating the Medicare program after a couple of years into their state health alliances. But there are strict requirements in the proposal that the Secretary of Health and Human Services will ensure. And she will, or he will, make the decision. That is, if that should happen, the state must provide at least the same level of benefits as was in the health — in the Medicare program — if they go into the health alliance. And it could be no worse. It must be at least equal to or better.

We need to still remain cognizant of the fact that a first generation Hispanic or a newly-arrived immigrant is not the same as a third, fourth, or fifth generation Latino.

Again, all this is to reiterate that for Latinos and Latinas in the health care field, the real action will center at the state level. That will determine what will constitute the long-term care benefits, whether or not Medicare will ultimately go into a state health care alliance, the level of representation, and, as importantly, how will it be delivered, the infrastructural services and person power or manpower issues.

For older persons, I'm very confident, having been in the field of aging for many years, that the elderly and the disabled, who all are entitled to these benefits, are going to come out ahead. That I am confident about.

However, for Latino elders and minority elders who have low or limited education, do not speak English, it is going to create another hurdle or challenge to try to deal with what is going to be an even more sophisticated, although we think, a more streamlined, more efficient and more accessible service.

So, with that, I will stop, and I thank you for allowing me to speak. I can be here for a few more minutes if you wish.

Moderator: Thank you. I would like to take the opportunity to introduce Professor Perales, who joined us midway. Mr. Perales is Deputy Mayor of the City of New York and oversees the city's public health programs. I'd like to give him an opportunity to speak to you now.

Mr. Perales: Thank you. I will be very brief. I assume the Assistant Secretary offered to stay so that he might take questions. So, that, allow me to be very, very brief, and I do want to comment on, not necessarily that part of Fernando's presentation about the health care reform, but health care reform, in general, is very much on the minds of so many of us. A couple of provincial responses from the Big Apple: the whole question of access to health care has meaning to us that goes well beyond the question of insurance. That is not to say that we are not very, very enthusiastic about Bill Clinton's proposals, but, that, for some time, we have had very, very generous health insurance benefits for the poor in New York. New York State has the most expansive, the most generous Medicaid program. Eligibility is very, very broad and the benefits are very broad.

Yet, in New York City, we will have neighborhoods where the health status indicators rival those of the third world, where the life expectancy of a man in Harlem is less than that of a man in Bangladesh, where infant mortality rates in South Bronx are worse than those in most parts of South America. So, that access is not just getting an insurance card, because in New York, the poor have insurance cards. But, I want to talk about, for a few minutes, is how are we going to make sure when we expand health insurance to people who don't have it now, that they have real access to health care.

In New York City our experience has been people run around with a Medicaid card and no physician wants to get near them. And, what we've seen in so many of our neighborhoods, is that the physician has disappeared, not just because he couldn't make any money, but the issues of security.

I can take you to our city, which is, frankly, the center of health care excellence in the world, where the major discoveries in medicine occur in our city. And, yet, with all of those great hospitals and great institutions, we know that half the people can't get decent health care, even with a health insurance card. So I don't want to talk about the whole concept of how do you get access to health care meaningful.

We have been experimenting with a concept of developing a network of community health centers in places where the doctor, the family physician, is no longer a reality. We can place several doctors together with nurses, other physician extenders, whether they be nurse practitioners or physician's assistants.

And we can develop a model. And I don't want to make it sound like the House of McDonald's concept where we will replicate them on — in every neighborhood. But the concept is the same.

You can develop a model that will work, that you can set up relatively inexpensively, that is linked to hospitals, that provides managed care in the best sense of the word of managed care, where if the child in that family has an earache at two a.m., the mother doesn't have to bundle that baby up and run to an emergency room, because there's a telephone number that can be called and where there will be people answering that telephone number because we've got a network of physicians linked to hospitals.

That's something we call communicare. It's something I want everyone to think about as we move toward the whole question of health care. How do you insure that there is real access? How do you make sure that that card has meaning? And how do you get doctors to where they are needed? That, I think, is something that has not been focused on.

And, I recognize again that let's get the insurance, national health insurance, in place first. At the same time, let's do it in a way that fosters the development of true access to health care.

And I advocate the development of these networks done through a community-based approach. I think what the government has to do is not necessarily for one of these health centers is provide the financing so

that existing community hospitals, existing not for profits, can get into the business of the development of these health centers.

This is not a pipe dream of the war on poverty. We had something on this community health center movement. Many of you know of existing community health services. This is real. And what we ought to do is to ensure that we go back to that concept of providing health care in a neighborhood-based fashion.

But, now, with everybody having health insurance, we'll be able to pay for these health centers. They won't go broke, because people will have health insurance. Now is the time to really establish a community health center movement, based on a vehicle of just providing financing.

And let that financing be paid off through the payment of health care. I don't want to get too technical, but it's the way hospitals are built, and the way hospitals are paid for because the reimbursement rate includes debt service.

So, that we have an opportunity, it seems to me, to develop community health centers. And when we're thinking about real access, we ought to be thinking about how we use outreach workers, how we use vans, how do we pay for that. Can they be made part of the reimbursement rules.

There's something else, because I think that health care training is something that the reform package talks about. There is concern on the part of a great many people that the limitation of the numbers of residency slots will impact badly on our neighborhoods. Let's make sure that if we're going to limit the number of doctors and the types of doctors that come into existence in the future, that they have doctors that either have to have trained in poor communities or that there are some guarantees that you will be, people in poor communities, will still have access to training programs and residency programs. Right now, there is great concern that that is going to disappear.

The proposed health care plan, the President's plan, for the first time is going to move us down the road to developing home and community-based systems, that is, long-term care.

In other words, let me just give you an example. If you have less residency spots, and I'm an intern. I'm going to want to choose a hospital that's in a nice neighborhood, where I can learn how — more sophisticated surgery. I don't want to get — go to a hospital that serves an inner city community, where what I'm going to learn is just taking care of, you know, what I consider minor illnesses. I'm going to want to go to that fancy place to get my training.

I'm concerned that that can happen if we limit the number of residency slots, because right now, there are so many residency slots that somebody's got to go to those inner city hospitals, or those rural hospitals.

So, I think we're going to have to keep these things in mind when we talk about health care reform, issues about health care training, just what impact it's going to have on poor communities, just what impact it's going to have on people who are culturally different. Are we going to limit the number of doctors? And, if so, ought we not to make sure that the limits are not on people who have some cultural and language advantage.

Therefore, it's real critical, not just for this benefit, but for the whole concept of health alliances at the state level, that Latinos have representation, input and connection at the state level with their legislature and with their governor.

It's about time we begin to take care of those advantages. Let us not, in this process, limit people's advantages. I could go on, but I think — one other thought that concerns me, and I don't know whether I missed it, the discussion of it.

But, the President's health insurance program does not include undocumented workers. And there is concern, clearly. The Federal Government is responsible for immigration also and control of the borders. The Federal Government cannot, in good conscious, say it is not financially responsible for the health care of the undocumented once they are here.

Someone is going to provide that care. We don't live in a society, I hope, in which we're going to allow people to suffer on the streets and not be provided with care.

So I understand the current proposal is that only emergency care would be reimbursed by the Federal Government. And it's very unclear what funding stream will be available to reimburse hospitals and other provider institutions that will continue to provide care for the undocumented.

Again, the point is the responsibility of control of our borders and the immigration policy is in the hands of the Federal Government. It seems to me that care for the undocumented must also remain in the hands of those who are in control.

Or else what will happen is that those of us who live in communities with large undocumented workers will have to pay with our local tax base, and make it much tougher for those communities to continue to provide the kind of care that, I think, we will continue to provide. There's no question that communities where undocumented workers live will continue to provide health care.

So I just wanted to leave you with that point. Thank you.

Moderator: I'd like to introduce now Dr. Luis Estevez, who is with the Director, he is the Director of Medical Affairs at the Morrisania Diagnostic and Treatment Center in the South Bronx. I would like to say he's here speaking on behalf of Mr. Angel Laporte, who was unable to join us today, and we hope that you will join us later on and participate with the audience.

Dr. Estevez: Thank you. It's a pleasure to be here, and as Mr. Grimaldo mentioned, I'm the Director of a health center in South Bronx, the heart

of the South Bronx. It's located in Congressman Serrano's District. I think he just left a little while ago.

I'd like to say that I've had the honor and the privilege of participating in many of the health care task force focus groups and have had an opportunity to see its development throughout these last several months. And I support the principles upon which the health care plan is based. But, I do share a number of concerns, and some of those concerns have already been stated.

Let me ask. How many of us have long-term care insurance? Two people. And that's one of the real risks we face in this country, as we live longer and face increasing chances of a disability.

So, I'll try to limit myself to very specific comments on three issues: health care of the undocumented, essential community providers, and the Medicare, Medicaid budget.

Why am I so concerned about the health care of the undocumented? Well, some of my friends are undocumented. Many of my patients are undocumented. Some of my family is undocumented. And I'd like to show how this issue relates in a clinical manner to some of the things that I deal with every day. But I need to give you some background.

Morrisania is many of the neighborhood health centers. It's located in an inner city area which is characterized by a young population, which is indigent, largely Latino, of low socioeconomic status, and low educational attainment.

In addition, the Morrisania district in New York City happens to be the epicenter of the HIV-infection indemnity. One out of 32 babies born in the local hospitals is HIV-positive. A sexually active woman in South Bronx in that area has a one-in-five chance of coming in contact with an HIV-positive man.

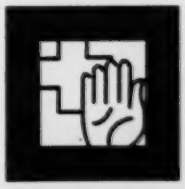
Of the HIV-infected individuals, three-quarters have been infected as a result of intravenous drug use or sexual contract with an intravenous drug user.

In addition, this area suffers from a high infant mortality rate, which was mentioned before. And that infant mortality rate is not uniform across the different ethnic groups. The infant mortality rates for African-Americans in that community is twice that for Caucasians. And, for Puerto Ricans and other Latinos, it's almost as bad as it is for the African-Americans.

In addition, there are a number of preventable diseases which we see basically not well controlled, such things as essential hypertension, diabetes, asthma, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

As part of the New York City Health and Hospice Corporation, Morrisania serves the community without regard to its ability, the individual's ability, to pay for any of those services.

I need to give you also an idea of the case mix that we see. Approximately 45 percent of the people that we see in that health center are on Medicaid, about 5 percent on Medicare, and the other half, essentially, is either self-pay/no pay.



Many of the self-pay/no pay category are undocumented. And they have special problems. Because of the concern or the skepticism about dealing with bureaucracies, many of these undocumented individuals will delay seeking health care until their condition is much more progressed. So what happens? Instead of going in for early intervention, when they have this cough, they may last six months, not knowing what it is, getting night fevers, and going in to an emergency room and be diagnosed with multi-drug resistent tuberculosis.

The sad part is that the morbidity associated with many of the diseases is preventable. And, in fact, you can quantify it. The New York State Health System Agency has quantified these diseases which are minimal to prevention. And this category is called "ambulatory care sensitive conditions."

And what they have done is they have taken 14 most common illness and they've seen — okay, they place an index on it, a number. And, it turns out that in many of the inner city communities, people delay care, instead of going to get that preventive care, controling that asthma or that hypertension. They'll delay care until it's much more progressed and that causes an excess morbidity and an excess rate of hospitalization.

The public health policy, that's put forth, needs to make sure that we take care of the prevention aspect. And, as mentioned before, sometimes we deal with issues that are penny-wise and pound-foolisn was the expression.

Secondly, from a purely public health prospective, we need to contain the spread of many of these illnesses. And, even if it's only out of self-interest, we need to provide health care to this population.

What do I mean by that? Well, even Jesse Helms' children may be in a position where they're on the subway. Unlikely, but it's possible, okay? And, if somebody has tuberculosis which is uncontrolled, that can spread, okay? So we have to take a look at public health measures in a broad sense.

I have another concern and that's that bad debt and charity care pool funds will disappear under the proposal. And these funds for essential community providers provide funds for health care facilities which see a disproportionate share of uncompensated care, the so-called safety net providers.

And let me tell you how it works. Hospitals that serve the under-served currently have some recourse. These bad debts are partially reimbursed, not fully, but 70 to 80 cents on the dollar, something like that, which for a system like the New York City Health and Hospice Corporation means four to five hundred million dollars a year.

If these bad debt and charity care pool funds are eliminated with the thinking that coverage under the plan will be sufficient to cover everybody except the undocumented, then it will grossly impact on the Health and Hospice Corporation's ability to deliver care for everybody.

Next, the Medicare phase-down by 1998 and the Medicaid, and the elimination of Medicaid disproportionate share of funds, for essential community providers, will also impact on our ability to deliver care.

Let's look at why. For our facility, the Medicare receipts are only about five percent. For the Corporation as a whole, they are only about 12 percent. But, frankly, Medicare helps to cross-subsidize some of those unreimbursed cases and unreimbursed services. So, in a sense, it does affect the ability to deliver health care to everybody.

So, here are my recommendations. First, in order to deliver health care to the Latino community in an optimum way, we need more Latino providers. Sounds simple. We need to recruit, train, and retain the most talented providers that we can gather from our communities to provide health care to those very communities.

We need support for essential community providers. I submit to you that it's unconscionable, and it's not unethical not to deal with needs of this population.

We need to have funding for areas of high need without regard to citizenship as the analogy of the fire department reported. Bad debt and charity care pool funds need to be targeted to health centers with large populations of the undocumented.

Culturally irrelevant and competent care needs to be delivered. Within the context of good primary care, we need disease prevention and health promotion and education, particularly of our communities.

We need case management of those cases, because of the complicated nature of many of their psychosocial problems that are associated with their disease.

And, as Mr. Angel Laporte from our health center likes to say, we need to have health centers without walls. You know, we do a pretty good job in our health center. About 96 percent of the children are immunized by age two.

How does that compare with what's outside of our walls? Outside of the health center's walls, we're looking at only about a third of the children under two years of age are immunized. We've done, under his leadership, is try to go outside of that community, getting help in establishing school-based health centers, establishing satellite centers. All these are potential models for the kind of health care we need to deliver.

And, lastly, our community deserves excellent quality. So we need to make sure that we deliver this health care within the context of total quality management style to make sure that health care for the poor, the undocumented is not any less excellent than that care provided to those who can pay. Thank you very much.

Moderator: Thank you. During this segment next, I would like to give an opportunity to all of the panelists to respond to one another's comments and any other comments you'd like to incorporate thus far.

Congressman Pastor: When the hate started in January with President and his health care reform, we had brought to an issue of undocumented people that needed to be covered, because it made good public health sense.

The doctor has told you and has eloquently told you that in just terms of our own self-interest, we should have services provided to people who are here undocumented, just for good public health reasons. Take care of our kids, that is, he gave the example of riding or being in the metro train.

But this year, you know, we've had some hard economic times. And, in this Congress, we've already faced three issues that deal with immigrant —immigration bashing — immigrant bashing. I'll give you two examples.

The first example was when we were doing the bill to provide relief to the flood victims in the midwest. And one of the people in appropriations got up and made the motion to amend the bill that someone who is undocumented could not get a direct service or benefit from this resources that we were allocating. It was a stupid thing to do. What do you do? The guy's up, or she's up, to her neck in water; do you ask if they have papers before you save them? Anyway, we won that fight in appropriations.

The second battle came on the House floor when we dealt with the President's issue on the voluntary service bill. Another amendment was made that nonprofit groups or institutions who got some of this money had to certify that they would not serve undocumented people.

So, in 1994, the issue is going to be undocumented people and the services that they're getting. I mean you have a governor from California jumping into this and there's a real — the political issue for 1994 is immigrant and how — undocumented immigrants — and what services they're getting for free from the taxpayers of this country.

Bill Clinton, sensing that, did not take the argument of good public health care, and he decided not to provide undocumented people. They will not receive a card, unless they're employed. If they're employed and their employer has to carry the plan, then they will be eligible for the card.

The reality is this. The President's plan proposes to use roughly $124 billion dollars in Medicare savings, which will accrue between the years 1994 and the year 2000, and redirect those savings solely towards expanded long-term care and prescription drug benefits.

So then we say how are you going to deal with the issue of public health care? And this may go to one of the questions that came up. Right now, in our community, we have community health networks. In many under-served areas, that's how people get health care, through a community health network. They propose that community health network is going to be kept, funded largely by public monies, and also with some contracts with alliances.

So, they see that that, you know, will be the service delivered for undocumented people. They will, unless they're working. If they're not working, they don't have the health card. Then they see that community health network to be the service provider for undocumented people, and that's how they will deal with the issue of good public health.

I still think that it's in the interest of every American to insure that any resident in this country be able to get the health card, because if we don't, in the long run, we're exposing our kids and ourselves to bad public health policies.

Many seniors are not comfortable with HMO's because of the issues of access and bureaucracy. So we're going to have to give great attention to how we address those issues.

We're going to continue to work on that issue, but it's a hot political issue, and, I think, for those reasons, the President decided not to include undocumented people.

Moderator: Dr. Torres-Gil.

Dr. Torres-Gil: If I can just add, in response, to a few of the comments that the Congressman and others raised up. I think Congressman Pastor is right.

Our central dilemma, our — this administration — is at immigration and undocumented persons is a very hot, political issue. If it had not been at the level in terms of emotionalism and irrationality that we see out there, perhaps the President would have a little more leeway on this issue and not have to handle that comment very carefully.

I'm from Los Angeles, and I know full well the importance and value and necessity of immigrants, whether they're documented or not documented and the tremendous contributions they make.

And, I see firsthand of the spread of T.B. and other types of diseases is occurring, precisely, because we're not providing health care to persons who don't happen to meet our own litmus test.

Having said that, the plan and the proposal, and keep in mind, it's evolving. It's going to go through modifications that Congress will have a lot to say about what ultimately comes out and the negotiation between the Executive Branch and the Congress.

But the plan right now proposes to address this dilemma in the following way. First, as pointed out, persons who are not here legally, undocumented persons, will not have access to the card; however, they will continue receiving all services they now get, which includes not just emergency care under Medicaid, but, I know in California, we also pay for low income, pregnant women, who are undocumented. We also provide other levels of primary care. And so those will continue.

Secondly, the community and migrant health centers which are not supposed to discriminate according to citizenship will continue to provide that care to these individuals. And, in terms of access, that's where many of them had to go as the gentleman here mentioned earlier.

Third, I'd like to point out that this proposal, and, I think, to the large credit of Dr. Phil Lee, who's our Assistant Secretary for Health, is going to have a major public health and medical indigent piece in the health care proposal. And I know they're working out the numbers right now with the Office of Management and Budget to, one, try to provide more funds to those hospitals and community clinics who have a disproportionate share of medically indigent individuals, including undocumented persons, to try to steer the flow, so that, in fact, they come out ahead in terms of the dollars that they actually get.

The plan also has a political public health piece, which is almost going back to the traditional public health responsibility, which is to deal with infectious and communicable diseases. And next billing is they're going to go in to assisting and dealing with many of the problems that were mentioned here at the community level.

In terms of the supply of physicians, the plan explicitly is going to alter the high proportion of specialists who stay out of under-served area and provide requirements and incentives to have more primary care physicians go to underserved area whether they're inner city or rural areas or populations with high proportions of minorities.

One of the issues, however, that has to be addressed, is who will be defined as an essential care provider? If you're defined as an essential care provider, then you have to get — then you're part of that alliance and you get reimbursement through the health care alliance.

The Secretary is given that charge of defining who they are. And certainly we expect that that's going to be defined broadly and even literally. So that perhaps even school-based health care program can be classified as essential care providers.

However, for Latino elders and minority elders who have low or limited education, do not speak English, it is going to create another hurdle or challenge to try to deal with what is going to be an even more sophisticated, although we think, a more streamlined, more efficient and more accessible service.

Again all of this as a way to — and I grant it's kind of a smoke in mirrors in attempt where undocumented won't get the card, but through the other ways, we hope and expect that they will continue getting, at least, the level of services. And, in all likelihood, if all this survives in Congress, will get even higher levels of services.

So, the last point I'll make is that ultimately the passage of the President's health care plan is going to be dependent upon whether we can get 50 percent plus one vote in the Senate and the House, and, whether or not we can counteract the incredible lobbying that will occur among the insurance companies, the pharmaceutical companies, other groups that may not have our interest at stake. And you've already seen the million dol-

lars campaign in the newspapers and on television.

And, so, the final product which is really the American democratic system at its best and maybe worst, is a set of compromises and competition among different interest groups. I think we have to ask ourselves, and I'm speaking now not as a representative of the administration, but, as a Latino, to be prepared about what I see in Los Angeles.

What can we do to insure that this bill passes? We're going to come out ahead, and then we can work from there. What will defeat the bill? And how do we mitigate that? And certainly issues of immigration and undocumented persons, which is such a hot issue, it may well determine which members of Congress vote for this bill, or don't vote for this bill.

And I think Mrs. Clinton and Ira Magaziner and the President are very cognizant about the very dicey and delicate political balance in trying to get this bill passed. So, this is not a way to defend what is occurring, and what the proposal has, that I share your concerns.

But it is a way of explaining the conundrum that we are faced, and our first priority is to pass this plan. Without it, we have little or nothing. With it, we have an opportunity to move ahead and begin to modify and evolve that plan so we can deal with what will certainly be gaps and even imperfections.

So, with that, I thank you for the opportunity to speak and if I may excuse myself to race over and deal with prescription drugs.

Moderator: Thank you. Mr. Falcon.

Mr. Falcon: I think it's very important to understand exactly what it's stating in terms of the undocumented debate. It's not an us and them issue. It's very much an issue about all of us as a community.

It would have been a much better approach —we understand the political reality — but it would have been a much better approach to the undocumented, if they'd simply remain silent on the issue, which we have done under a number of initiatives. It simplifies the care. But remain silent on the issue. We did remain silent on the issue.

What is coming up now is that when we are going to specifically exclude one group from health care that means all of us in the Hispanic community will be scrutinized when we go in for medical services. If I forgot my health security card at home when I went out driving, and I got in a car accident. And I'm taken over to G.W. emergency center. You can be darn sure that they're going to look at the color of my skin and try to figure out whether or not I'm documented or undocumented, because if I'm undocumented going in there, they're not going to be covered for the services.

You can make sure that's going to happen throughout the health care system. This is not only an issue of coming to be undocumented, but it's an issue about whether or not all us are going to be getting the level of coverage which we deserve as American citizens and legal residents of this country.

And, this is really time to mention — I have to say I was very proud of Congressional Hispanic Caucus when they held hearings on the subject. It was now a couple of months back. And, when each of the members, when they went through in their opening remarks, addressed the issue of undocumented and said that this is the time that we have to gather as a community and provide coverage to all those residents who are a part of our community.

You know, but, beyond that issue, this is simply excluding one, the undocumented, from health care, so I'm really in genuine discrimination against indigents as a whole. There's also the issue of what's going to happen to our communities if we don't provide substantial coverage for the undocumented. We're going to end up bankrupting communities where we live. Because as you — we're going to have to provide coverage for the undocumented as they come into the system.

Yet, in New York City, we will have neighborhoods where the health status indicators rival those of the third world, where the life expectancy of a man in Harlem is less than that of a man in Bangladesh, where infant mortality rates in South Bronx are worse than those in most parts of South America.

But, if there isn't a very specific and substantial funding stream to those organizations that are providing services to the undocumented, we are going to bankrupt the health care systems where we live. They're simply not going to be able to provide the funding and the coverage for undocumented where we live.

And I'm also concerned about the community-based organizations that have traditionally provided services to our community. A number of our groups that provide services have said about 50 percent of the population they serve are undocumented. And, if funding dropped out for them, they're going to have to close their doors.

And this is at a time when we really should be investing in the Hispanic community-based organization infrastructure that has traditionally been there and provided the services for the community.

You know, I'm very hopeful we're beginning to hear something about some type of funding stream to the community-based groups. It's an issue we're going to have to watch out for.

But, as we talk about the undocumented, let's be very clear. We're not talking about only an issue of finding a way through the back door to provide some services to the undocumented. We're talking about what constitutes a real American. That is the tenor of the debate. And, if we have to stake our claim, we are part of this country, and we've been a part of this country, and we contribute mightily to the health and welfare of this country. And this is what we deserve as a community.

Moderator: Any other questions or remarks?

Ms. Carbonell: I'd like to speak regarding what Dr. Herrell had mentioned before regarding portability and geographic mobility issues. I think Dr.

Fernando Torres-Gil mentioned briefly the long-term care.

But, as I was hearing some of the comments from the rest of the members of the panel, I was concerned about the issue of since the state will have flexibility to be able to determine the kinds and mixes under the face of the package of the federal one, then we're going to run into the issue of if floating, geographic portability is not appropriately assigned at the federal level, then we're going to have a lot of questions unanswered and a lot of lack of answers when we move from state to state and exactly what's going on right now.

Now is the time to really establish a community health center movement, based on a vehicle of just providing financing.

Although there's a general mandate that states are having that change. For instance in Medicaid — where is it — the State of Florida is very different in the kind of services that service the mixes and access to services. Maybe New York State has another issue.

So, I'm concerned about this and I think that, you know, in general, out there we need to be watching out for those kinds of issues.

Dr. Herrell: It's really important, I think. I think that the bottom line at this point for our community is really empowerment. And I don't mean empowerment as I currently hear it being used. It should come more and more of buzz word.

And, believe me, nobody can empower us. We have to empower ourselves. And, so, we need to begin to work at the individual level, at the personal level to decide what is it that we want and how is it that we're going to get it, so that then we can go out and we can begin to help, assist in the process of making sure that our communities begin to understand that they do have the power that is given to them by themselves as a group to expect change.

And, a concern that I hear throughout the country as I go out and I meet with groups, is a concern related directly to what effect the federal move towards more state involvement is going to have within our communities.

And one of the reasons for that is that traditionally our minority communities have felt unempowered. They have felt that they have not had access to formulagrams, to state programs and to other types of activities. And they still feel disenfranchised.

And, so as we look at ways in which we can begin to get our communities to assess what needs to be done, I think it's critical that we begin to make sure that they're involved. Not only at the individual level, but, also, within those decision-making activities that will ultimately take place at the local and at the state levels so that they can look at the outcome with a view that that outcome has to reflect the dynamics of those local needs.

And, let me tell you, it's very, very frustrating for me as a Hispanic woman, to go out to communities like in the City of Los Angeles, for example, where I was recently, to attend a women's, a Hispanic women's meeting, and see a city with five million Hispanics, at least, and, yet, the level of unempowerment that I saw among the Latinas within the community.

And, instead of defeating me, I just feel reenergized, because we still need to move our agenda. We still need to move yet the Hispanic community and make sure that they continue on their road to obtaining parity. And really that's the bottom line. That's what it's about. It's parity, whether it's in health status, whether it's in socio-economic or educational levels and whether it is in access to care, to the health benefits that will be made available for us.

I want to share with you a policy paper that I was asked to prepare by the three Hispanic congresswomen, prior to a meeting with Mrs. Clinton and Mrs. Gore at the White House. I brought several copies for those of you who might be interested. And, it's really the first policy paper of its kind in addressing the needs of Hispanic women, infants and children. Because I know the reality, and I feel that I have to speak up to this issue, also, as a woman is that oftentimes, we're viewed, most of the time, we are viewed as vessels who are there to bare children and once they're born to nurture them. And so we tend to think of women within those stages of life. And we forget that women's help is broader than that.

It means making sure that women in society are healthy so that they can continue particularly in our communities as the caretakers that we are. And, so, that we don't forget to provide services to them, only when it comes to the prenatal, the pregnancy stage, or the post-natal stage.

We have a long life span and quality of life is very, very important.

Moderator: I don't want to leave this panel without having an opportunity for the audience to raise some questions. I know that there are some questions in the audience. And I'll just — because we don't have a microphone, I'd like you to take — just stand up one at a time, I'll call on you, and speak in a loud voice and please tell us your name. Yes, sir.

Voice: One of the —

Moderator: Your name, sir?

Mr. Valdes: Ernesto Valdes, —. One of the questions that has been asked is the question of the training, and conversion of —. I don't see that the plan have allocated no — to obtain, to prepare of training, you need a health care work force that will be needed to be able to provide the additional health care that we need to provide it, or to retrain the poor folk that we needed to be able to do that.

The fact of the matter is that in the State of New York, for us to meet the principle same ratio of the general physician primary care physician, we would need 50,000 —. And there's no fund being allocated to, or the incentives being created, to those of you who do that.

So, the question also is, I believe, that we need to advocate how we are going to train them, what course are we needed to help them look for, we need it. At the rate in population increase Hispanic community and so forth. That is at the — .

As a Latino, which I would like to speak now, I'm getting concerned that we are told that this is a — the undocumented issue is an issue that is political incentive and therefore we should not unify. And, therefore, that we should not raise our voice or take it to our community that challenge, because the fact of the matter is that when we — they — people — on undocumented question, we have got a —. All right then all because I'm — I'll evaluate as a result that we're challenging that. A lot of mistakes are as hot as is this issue and don't challenge it, we're going also economically we'll — que aspecte — so I will advocate let's take the challenge on, let's not flake out.

Moderator: Response from the panel?

Congressman Pastor: Well, I think he's right. If we remain silent, obviously we try to do what we need to do up here in either voting for it or getting involved in administration. But, as of the Hispanic community, we need to let the President know that he's making a mistake, not only, because of all the reasons we've talked about. And I — this is a community who has supported him. This is a community who voted for him. And I think we just need to let him know that we're, we are concerned.

And we are to let our friends know who are not Hispanic that it's in their interest that we include undocumented people for good public health reasons. I mean just to take care of their own health, that it's something they ought to look at and help us in getting the President to say that any resident of this country will have the ability to get a health card. It's that simple. I mean it's not too complicated. All we say is every resident.

And so I agree with you. We need to let our President know that he's making a major mistake by not including undocumented people in his health plan.

Moderator: I'm sorry. You have a comment?

Dr. Estevez: Yes, with respect to the balance of physicians, family care physicians. In New York State, and, I think it's reflected on the nation as a whole, there is a 70-30 balance of specialists, being 70 percent, and primary care doctors being 30 percent.

Any rational health care system would turn that over to be 70 percent primary care and 30 percent specialists. I think the plan goes halfway and splits the difference 50-50. But I think also our approach needs to be not just to accept that balance but to seek to recruit and train and retain Latinos in health care.

That can't start in college. Maybe even high school is a little late, right? We have to start establishing business and school partnerships to lend role models to have programs whereby our students can go into the hospitals and schools and see what it's like and try to influence them.

I went to a school, a junior high school, a number of years ago, and the students there tell me that I was the first Latino doctor they had ever met.

So I sent one of my African-American physicians there to also talk. And he was the first African-American physician they had ever met also. I think that's a shame. You know, we have to start recruiting and training and retaining our own. And that's how we are going to address, ultimately, the health care of our communities.

Mr. Tidiablo: Good afternoon. My name is Miguel Tidiablo, professor of health policy, —University System. I'd like to address a concern that some of the panelists referred to community-based health care providers.

As I read the Clinton health plan, I understand the essential community providers to be at great risk in favor of increasing the consolidated —consolidation of health care delivery to our community on a large scale we cannot risk. In California where I come from, there's some evidence to suggest that actually provision of care to a large HMO at most may be hazardous to health, that low income minorities and that the, for example, one of our largest HMO's in California, they've identified that the cancer screening for women in those medical facilities that have a predominance of low income members, is significantly lower than the rest of the — their membership population.

So, I think we're going to have to keep these things in mind when we talk about health care reform, issues about health care training, just what impact it's going to have on poor communities, just what impact it's going to have on people who are culturally different.

As I read the Clinton health plan, it's going to promote increasing consolidation of the — care, at the expense of these community-based providers. Why?

Because, first of all, it puts a five-year limit on compensation for community clinics and other community-based providers. And it gives the states the right to waive the compensation by HMO's to large-scale health plans to community-based providers. If the state — if the HMO's can prove to the states that they are as capable of delivering health care to our people, in short, I think, this is a Trojan Horse, and I'd like to have the panel address it.

Mr. Falcon: That's a major concern of COSSMHO. In fact, next month, actually this month, we're starting a series of community meetings around the country. And one of the major areas we're going to focus on was really the community-based infrastructure that we have that has been delivering services through our community and what we need to do to strengthen it under the health plans.

I'll give you an example. Our community-based groups are going to be expected to compete against HMO's and other forms of health care providers. But, the experience of mine, using Little Havana as an example, when Josefina provides a service to an elderly member of her community, she's also providing somebody who's culturally competent in delivering services and speak the language and understand the patient they're providing the services to.

Josefina also has a whole range of supportive services that her center provides. She has home delivery of meals; she has support staff that goes in and gives services in the home; and she also has case workers,

the whole range of services that are put to you. And none of the HMO's operating in Miami wouldn't be able to provide to patients who are currently receiving services through your centers.

But she's going to have to compete, probably on the same rate, and we're concerned about that. There has to be some recognition that there is a different level of services being provided to conditionally under-served communities.

And they have to be reimbursed at a different rate. In that way, they can compete. Certainly on quality of services, I would say Josefina can compete against anybody in the Miami area. But there has to be an appropriate claimature. You can't stack the deck against our community-based group that has been traditionally providing services.

The other concern we brought up to Ira Magaziner in some of the meetings we've had is that community-based organizations, as the plan is now written, won't be able to serve on the health alliance boards, because those boards are designed to represent consumers of health care.

And, even though there's this general construct that one board will be representing the interest of consumers and another board, the health plan will be representing the interest of the health suppliers.

Well, in our communities, the community-based health providers have traditionally been the advocates for us as consumers of health care services. So I think there also has to been some recognition of that within the design of the governants, the health care system that allows us to bring our community-based groups into the governants of the health alliances and the health plans.

In addition, the Morrisania district in New York City happens to be the epicenter of the HIV-infection epidemic. One out of 32 babies born in the local hospitals is HIV-positive.

And, then, thirdly, I think there has to be an additional funding stream that's very specific on the amount and how it will be distributed to those community-based groups that have provided services to traditionally underserved populations.

This population is not as healthy as the general population; and, therefore, it needs more intensive services. And we have to have some recognition of that in terms of additional funding streams to those groups. This is the time where we should be building a community-based infrastructure that is worked. You know, we have the real success story in terms of the community health centers and the community-based groups providing health services in the Hispanic community. Now's the time to really invest in those and let them do what they do well.

Moderator: Excuse me, one moment. Because I'm afraid that the camera isn't picking up the sound and some of the comments and questions that you may have, I'm going to ask you to step up to the microphone. That will also keep me from having to exclude anyone who may want to speak. So, if you'll step up to the microphone and be cognizant that we do only have about 15 minutes for your comments and questions. So please step up if you will.

Dr. Marin: My name is Andoso Marin, and I'm with Personal Village, — American Association. Since I wasn't in the room when Falcon was saying that to provide medical care to the under — he mentioned aliens — will bring filing bankruptcy to some of these communities. Well, I believe that that's not only unfair, but it's unrealistic.

First of all, many of these large groups are people that is already working, because they already paying social security, other taxes. So to deny care to these population I believe it will bring a more serious problem.

Eighty percent of the patients that we see in a Spanish-speaking community center are providing. Now, I believe that the past one of the things that we have to do is try to implement a bi-national health program with the Mexican government and the American government. Somebody has to be responsible. We cannot just close our eyes.

And also I got to commend you for using some American — issues. Some — some money that generates this type of progress. —

In California, this city has just approved program in such time to meet their — and we have to be considered on national level.

There is a population of college trained physician. And, actually, at present time, every single state in the nation are working toward progress, taxi drivers in Carculcas (phonetic) these kind of odd jobs.

The city council in L.A. just working on this law that will allow these people to obtain one-year training in some of the universities in UCLA. And after that year, they will be licensed as physicians' assistants.

I think that will bring a tremendous amount of power, at least to be able to have enough infrastructure to take care of it.

Mr. Falcon: Actually, what I was saying was if we don't cover the undocumented and eliminate all the federal funding that goes currently to providers of services, then document it, we're going to bankrupt the health care services in the communities where we live. Then we're still going to have to provide those services, but there's going to be no reimbursement for those services.

And I think that's going to be too much of a restraint — of a strain — on a lot of communities to carry. That we have to be sure in the health care planning to provide some reimbursement to services for undocumented and just pretend that those services aren't going to happen, because they're going to happen. Relief services will provide them and other providers with their reimbursement.

Just addressing your issue of a bi-national approach. It's a very important issue for the health plan to take up. Particularly, I think that's between U.S.-Mexico border, and we brought together a group of leadership, about 75 Hispanic community leaders in health

Culturally relevant and competent care needs to be delivered. Within the context of good primary care, we need disease prevention and health promotion and education, particularly of our communities.

care, and what they proposed was that we take this idea of the one dollar border tax. But instead of spending it on new INS agents, let's spend it on health care for the border area. Mind the idea of the one-dollar border tax and let's invest it in health care for the border.

And, also, while I'm talking about the border, we need to recognize that if we going to coverage Puerto Rico at a much less level than we're going to cover the rest of the nation, we have to remember there's an air-reach border between Puerto Rico and the mainland. And, if we're going to be providing much of those services to Puerto Rico, we have to recognize what that's going to be in terms of that air border.

And, finally, you bring up a very good point in terms of ordinary doctors. We need to bring them into the system, particularly in terms of culturally competent services. There's a great population for us to bring in quickly in terms of providing interpreter services.

Dr. Marin: Just to finalize what's already mentioned — we have some members of the National Coalition for Aging, Hispanic Medical Associations, and we've been talking about this problem at least in Arizona, of Latin-American physicians, we have taken a position that we will provide medical care given that with no reimbursement as long as the hospital coverage is provided.

Dr. Estevez: Dr. Marin, I'd also like to add to the comment and that's the question of the internationally trained physicians. In New York we have a large pool of internationally trained physicians in many countries.

Dr. Marin: We're talking about thousands of physicians.

Dr. Estevez: Thousands. And I have some of them working in, you know, joint brotherhood. The New York City Health and Hospice Corporation has a refugee program where they have an accelerated program for training of physician assistants.

Now, these M.D.'s are trained as physician assistants, not with the idea that this is what they're going to do for the rest of their career. But it's an entry point to get them into working in a clinical setting, being able to give them time to study for their board certification health exams and also at the same time to provide central service of — . New York City was a model for that. And we just started it this year in New York City.

Dr. Marin: —

Moderator: Pardon me. I do want to make sure that everyone gets an opportunity to speak. Please keep your questions brief. Please also when you're leaving give us your name and where you are from. We are trying to transcribe all of these comments so that they will be available in published form later.

Mr. Gonzales: I'm Freddie Gonzales. I'm from — in New York. One of my concerns with the whole deal and the whole presentation is that I don't see enough emphasis on preventive medicine. I think that we have spent an hour and a half here, and all what I see is service being delivered. But I'm of the opinion that if we did not deal with preventive medicine, we are never going to have enough resources to deal with illness.

I think that in our communities, especially in Latino communities, we have to deal with education. I think that that is the first step toward prevention. I think that a lot of people in our community did not know how to use the system that we already have in place.

And if we don't deal with prevention, it doesn't matter how much money we put into this. It's not going to solve the problem of health care in our country.

Moderator: Any responses?

Congressman Pastor: I think that the Clinton package does have an element of preventive. If you smoke, your cigarette tax is going to go up a dollar or couple dollars of tax, as well as, I think, and alcohol. And any tax, sin proceeds, the Clinton Administration feels that prevention is something that is going to drive the cost down, so it's part of his program. I think he's taking it into consideration.

Moderator: What's the next question?

Ms. Ulloa: My name is Rosanna Ulloa. I'm Assistant Director of Minority International —Physical Therapy Association. And I would like to address the issue of allied health professionals.

Indeed, we talk a lot about doctors and nurses. There are also allied health professions who are in many ways we are serving our communities even more lots of times because of lack of access.

I would like to specifically address the issue of under-representation. In the association we have 57,000 members. It's 1.3 percent are Latinos, 1.4 percent are African-American. We have a department that deals with the issue of recruiting minorities into the profession.

The public health policy, that's put forth, needs to make sure that we take care of the prevention aspect. And, as mentioned before, sometimes we deal with issues that are penny-wise and pound-foolish was the expression.

I also deal with the issue of the internationally educated, and I would like to know how the health care reform bill addresses the issue of state licensing agencies that do not have any type of uniform guidelines to address the issue of, as we've been talking about in many ways, immigrant bashing.

I've worked a lot with internationally educated, and we have problems with state licensure simply because

the obstacles that are put to the internationally educated varies from state to state.

We also have discrimination at the level of CPO's. I've actually had people call me and tell me that they weren't accepted into a CPO or HMO network simply because they graduated from a university outside of the U.S.

...just in terms of our own self-interest, we should have services provided to people who are here undocumented, just for good public health reasons.

So, I would like to see more a clear strategy to deal with the licensure problem at the state level, so that, in the short term, this may be a way to deal with some of the problems that we have in terms of access.

If we're training, recruiting, all of that is going to be important, but it's not going to be affecting our community until the long term.

Moderator: Any responses?

Mr. Falcon: I'm trying to find out in terms of foreign scene doctors. It's interesting to know that we're running into the same situation of the us versus them — and we're trying to fully integrate them into the health care system. It's an issue that's been around for a long time. But, you know, there's the conception that they're not as good as real American health care providers.

Mr. Cin: Thank you. My name is Dr. Daniel Cin. I'm a gynecologist and obstetrician working in the State of New York. I'm an — gynecologist study at General Hospital in — I'm, first of all, thank you for the — all the members of the panel for — on we have said.

Let me address two issues in a short time. One of the issue that we are concerned about in obstetrician and gynecology is the malpractice prices that affect us in the State of New York.

As a consequence of that, we have seen less and less of the physician in gynecology able to take care of the poorest and sickest of them or especially if they're not going out on infant care.

I think that to try to make a reform become a third world issue is to stock your car with flat tire.

The second issue that I would like to — that was previously addressed — is the division of economic and — reform. There are millions, the goals of the mind, in community hospitals, HMO's, the doctors and there's somebody after all to take care of you if you

— today. It's not going to be an HMO. It's not going to be a hospital. It's going to the doctors. So it would be nice if I may — to give the money with the licensed people to serve the best with.

Moderator: Any responses to that? Next.

Ms. Santiago: I'm Anna Santiago from Indiana University. And I have two issues that I wanted to bring up and for you to give some response.

One is what will the health care reform package do to assure the fact, or progress the fact, that there's inequities in terms of service provision to Latinos?

For example, I do work on the disabled. Very, very few of these are ever referred to our educational training program. Most people are closed out with maybe activities of daily life technical skills, but very, very little is done for them in terms of educational training.

The second is what provisions are being made to address the fact that we have so little data on the health status of Latinos in this country? The only national survey that was done, a detailed survey with a Hispanic case, was done in 1983, '84. Our population has changed greatly in the last decade, and we really don't have very much information.

But, the census really only focused on work disability, very limited questions and new Latino PSAID data which is much broader in terms of the covered on health. But it's still limited. But, one of the things we did find in the Latino PSAID data, I know I've done this on disability data, at this point, is that the recording date is triflely important to discuss.

Ms. Herrell: I will respond to the second part of your question, in that the Federal Government, the public health service, and the department are very cognizant of the need to improve, not only the actual data collection process, but also the quality of the data that is obtained, as well as where they're much aware that cultural competence, culturally competent analysis, is also a strong requirement for us to look at the actual health status of the Hispanic populations in this country.

And, just this week, we, in the public health service, had a healthy year 2000 objective review for the Hispanic population with — under — Dr. Lee's office, and we have specific — the duty of —Assistant Secretary of Dr. — Buford. And it was clearly highlighted by the community groups who were present there that data collections still remain an area of great concern. And that was reflected there. Some improvements have been made. For example, right now the National Center for Health Statistics at the centers for disease control has been diligently trying to good work towards obtaining additional information that can be used.

And one of the reasons for that is that traditionally our minority communities have felt unempowered. They have felt that they have not had access to formulagrams, to state programs and to other types of activities. And they still feel disenfranchised.

And we are very conscious of some of the issues that are ongoing. And so we are making some steps. Maybe not the gigantic steps that we would like to see, but some changes are taking place, and we are beginning to look at the data that literally give space

to the Hispanic categories alone. Or also looking by some ethnic group that we can be segregated and further move along those lines.

Maybe Adolph would like to add something to — representing COSSMHO.

Mr. Falcon: Actually, just on data. I wanted to mention that next week, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus is going to introduce a Hispanic Health Improvement Act which has a very strong section, very specific and very strong section, on health data and treatment, providing a collection of data for Hispanic and population groups under all the major national health care systems. So there's a movement on that.

Congressman Pastor: I have a comment on the first point. People have visited me because one of the guiding forces as we reform is savings. Will a physician or practitioner make the decision not to go an extra test or an extra procedure because the person is disabled?

It's a real issue, and people have come forth or we need to insure that we don't — because they can disappoint and object to these. That doesn't become the main objective as the main objective is that a person get a quality of care, that he or she deserves.

And so I do agree with the woman from Indiana that it's an issue we're going to have to deal with. And hopefully, we will treat everybody equally in terms of receiving quality health care.

Moderator: We have just about five minutes left for questions.

Mr. Carnevali: Yes, my name is Jose Carnevali. I am a subwriter for a Camero newspaper, which is a Hispanic weekly for Washington and the metropolitan area.

I have comment for Mrs. Herrell and a question for Congressman Pastor.

Mrs. Herrell, we come from — you come from health and human services. We got, about four days ago, a letter from Dr. Pon (phonetic), who is in our newsroom, which said that — we're talking about expectancy of life among our population — and this press release distinguish in between estado vienese normales, Hispanics and Afro-Americans.

I guess that our health and human services have not realized yet that according to the census, between '90 and '93, Hispanics in this country grew over two percent total population. That is without counting those who are illegal or without documents. Only Salvadoreans in this country are probably over 300,000 Salvadoreans without papers.

I think it is very racist to distinguish in between estado vienese normal, Afro-American, and Hispanic. I think that the political, as well as the political correct term is talking about diversity, rather than racial, possible ethnics. I think the political correct is to start talking about why Hispanics, Hispanic-American, Hispanic-illegal, Afro-Americans, Latino. Anyway, I just wanted to make that comment.

And, what the worst of it is, that this person is Puerto Rican and Hispanic. That is a shame.

Ms. Herrell: I was going to ask you if we can get together after the session's over. I would very much like to follow up on that. Because as you're well aware the department is rather large, and I work with the public concerns. And I agree that we need to be much more sensitive in terms of how we refer to this people.

Mr. Carnevali: In this month before, I just wanted to ask you how does the Hispanic Caucus approach the part that the Clinton plan on, particularly on the universal coverage, includes the financing of those women that decide to have an abortion. And, apparently, correct me if I'm wrong, universal coverage covers that. Is it fair that the taxpayers' money is going to cover the needs, or the willing, of those women that wants to have an abortion done? Has the Hispanic Caucus done anything or said about this?

Voice: Yes, it is.

Voice: Yes, it is there.

Voice: Yes, it is very clear.

Congressman Pastor: The Caucus has not discussed that in detail, but I would tell you that if we took a vote, it's medical practice and if a woman desires to, decide to it, then it's her right to do it, and as part of the health care outreach that should be heard.

Moderator: Yes, sir, you have a question.

Mr. Taylor: Yes. I'll try to be brief even though I have a lot of comments.

I'm Paul Taylor, and I'm a state legislator from New Mexico. I want to speak just briefly about world health care. And I think that you've really covered this in terms of access in urban areas.

But, if you consider the wide expanses of some of the western states, and Congressman Pastor probably is more aware of this than anyone, I think you understand what the concern is for rural health care and access to care.

I want — I'm sorry that Dr. Torres-Gil isn't here. He mentioned that the immigrant and the nondocumented should still be covered under the community health program and with the migrant health center. There is a problem with that however.

And many of the — let me just preface this by saying that I had spent a lot of time in rural health centers in Colonias, because I represent those districts and I live right near the border.

On going to a rural health center, and a migrant center, I called for an appointment for a person. I didn't tell them who I was, because very often if you say you're a representative and you're going so you can have immediate kind of care. So I said this person needs care, and it's of an emergency in nature. And they said, "I'm sorry. We can't take her." This was in June. "We can't take her until September." So I was very concerned about that.

As I visited them, I talked to them. There seems to be a great deal of problem in terms of staff members and we dealt with that. But we have not dealt with

If I forgot my health security card at home when I went out driving, and I got in a car accident. And I'm taken over to G.W. emergency center. You can be darn sure that they're going to look at the color of my skin and try to figure out whether or not I'm documented or undocumented

the problem of capital outlay items in those areas.

And, so, I bring this, particularly, to Congressman Pastor's attention and see what we can do about the necessities for additional facilities to take care of these patients. And I live right on the border near Apostle and near Juarez. And the problems, and I really think that capital outlay items should be a part of any kind of bill in addition to service.

Then they see that community health network to be the service provider for undocumented people, and that's how they will deal with the issue of good public health.

Ms. Rios: My name is Dr. Elena Rios. I'm the President of the Chicano-Latino Medical Association in California.

And, also, I wanted to bring to the attention, you're at — hard to speak on behalf of the government — of the plans. A group of 26 national and regional organizations came together a couple of weeks ago. We went to the White House and met with Ira Magaziner. We decided to establish ourselves as a coalition. We're calling it the Latino Coalition on Health, a vehicle to present to Congress, that we are very much in support of the Hispanic Caucus' positions for the undocumented, for the universal access, and also for the Latino representation at all levels of the health policy boards, starting at the top with the National Health Board.

That we are also very much in tune with the need for access at different, in different areas of our community, including the essential community providers, and the board of health care area. And that we need more Hispanic health providers, allied health providers, as well as physicians.

This coalition, I just wanted to bring it up, because I think it's very important. We are having a meeting this afternoon, a legislative committee. We have a public relations committee. and we have a community organizing committee.

I was fortunate enough to be invited to the White House for the President's breakfast with physicians. The 10 Latino physicians that were at that meeting met with Surgeon General Coup and First Lady, Hillary Clinton, offering our support for health reform. I also handed her a paper that said we did not support the health plan at the same time. Because we don't support the way it's written right now.

But, we are going back to meet with Ira Magaziner in two weeks, and we are very interested in supporting the Hispanic Caucus. And, we ask that if anyone is interested in getting involved, that we are going to be meeting speakers in town-home meetings across the country for Surgeon General Coup.

And, it is very important that Latinos have a voice, and I think that that's — the major point is that we are involved, and we have tried to just open the door more for more Latino organizations. And a lot of the national organizations that are based in Washington are trying with us to help in that effort.

Moderator: Thank you. Dr. Rios. They are letting out the next session. I do want to give Mr. Laporte an opportunity to make his comments, and then we will go ahead.

Mr. Laporte: My name is Angel Laporte. I'm Executive Director of Morrisania Clinic in New York. And I took up what concerned me and that is that —which Puerto Rican. Certain communities varies 75 percent, about 85 percent are Hispanic, and of that, it is 75 to 80 percent of the population is Puerto Rican.

Certainly, I can envision right now as an individual responsible for the health care access, I see — a tremendous impact physically and —correctionally into our center. And even beyond Morrisania has — occurred. Yes. I thought it the same as Morrisania, you know, holds true.

And then the other communities throughout the nation that happens to have large Hispanic communities, Puerto Ricans, that we will address this issue at the level of including the island, you know, in this process when he's going to go back to, you know, — the panelists said.

We're going to end up treating these individuals at the very end stage of the health care needs, which is going to translate into a lot of resources financially, as well as human, in terms of the Spanish imported to be required.

And somehow some of the other many priorities I realize that we have facing us as we go about the health care package, that one is too diverse in the same level as — Latino — undocumented needs to be addressed.

My only concern, I think, and this is sort of a comment, I think this is formidable opportunity of

— legislature that I've ever seen in my life and some — certainly have a great level of experience in this to for once take this to the people.

And we are to let our friends know who are not Hispanic that it's in their interest that we include undocumented people for good public health reasons.

Now, educate. I don't think that we will have any great involvement — as community, going back to Dr. Herrell's comment. If we educate and we share with them what this whole process means, and, again, let me pause here and share with you that recently I asked my staff to conduct a brief and formal sort of questioning process with their own patients that come to our clinic.

And about 125 patients that we asked, the Latino ones, they included some of the African-Americans as well. Over 80 percent of them did not understand what this whole process is, you know, and I think we have got to do this. We got to somehow, if you're going to help the legislators to do this work, in and of the — members of the Hispanic Caucus to —as we have personal level experience, and we have tried to call in the experts on those sort of things. But, beyond that, I think we need to use our

own people, people that live in those communities. There's a liberal understanding of what's going to make this whole process work or not work.

Because no matter how fast and great a person's going to be, if he doesn't know who to use it, even at that much work, it's going to cost a great deal of money, and it's going to frustrate a lot. And it's going to continue to bring — mentality — that we don't know what we do or we don't know how to do things and all of these sort of a name calling in the —

We got to educate our people. Right? —They want to learn and they want to understand. And maybe we go a long way in dealing with the other things, also that the people that are making the decision, just made it, and that — I think we go a long ways to —

Moderator: Mr. Laporte, Thank you.

Mr. Estevez: One comment and that's to the issue of, in fact, that these people now serve other consequences are going to, you know, come out. And just to point out that right now in Puerto Rico, they do not have AZT coverage for Medicaid. So, as a result, in the South Bronx, and in other areas of New York, we are already seeing a large population of HIV-positive individuals who come from the island to New York to get treatment.

So I foresee that that would only increase it. It's a large disparity in the coverage for those individuals living on the island and both denied.

Moderator: Thank you gentlemen. Thank you very much for being here. Let's give one last round of applause for the panelists.

Session #5
Community Viablility

Moderator:

Richard Gonzales
National Public Radio

Friday, October 1 PROCEEDINGS

1:30 pm - 4:00 pm Rayburn House Office Building

Panel Members:

Maria Teresa Ayala
Executive Director
El Instituto del Progreso Latino

Frank Ballesteros
Executive Director
Micro Industry Credit Rural Organization (MICRO)

Frank Bonilla, Ph.D.
Profesor of Political Science, PH.D. Program
City University of New York

Katherine M. Donato, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology
Louisiana State University

Virginia Ramirez
Co-Chairwoman
San Antonio Communities Organized for Public Service

Gary Sagansky
Director of Corporate Trainng
Henry Ford Comunity College, Dearborn, Michigan

Mr. Gonzales: This session has been organized to discuss how the U.S. and global economies are evolving and how that impacts Latino communities, communities, which you are well aware, are finding it very difficult to rely on labor intensive industries as major sources of employment.

Latino communities are also finding it increasingly difficult to maintain adequate housing. In order to remain viable, at the minimum, these communities must sustain employment possibilities and finding people a place to live.

> No matter how much we kick around all the issues relating to housing, if people do not have medical and health insurance, if they do not have the dollars to pay for it, for health care, they are only going to be getting piecemeal treatment, patchwork.

Some of the questions we want to kick around here, for example, are what are the policy implications with regard to job retraining, housing, and community development. Are Latino communities more likely to benefit from increased rent subsidy programs or an emphasis on

home ownership. Are there other models around the country that our communities might emulate.

We will be joined, hopefully, by Congressman Luis Gutierrez, but I'd like to introduce our other panelists from whom we will hear.

Maria Teresa Ayala is the Executive Director of El Instituto del Progreso Latino, in Chicago, Illinois.

Frank Ballesteros is the Executive Director of Micro Industry Credit Rural Organization, Tucson, Arizona.

Frank Bonilla is the Director of Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños, of Hunter College in New York.

Katherine Donato is the Assistant Professor of Sociology of the Louisiana State University.

Virginia Ramirez is the Co-Chairperson of San Antonio Communities Organized for Public Service, or COPS.

And Gary Saganski is the Director of Corporate Training at the Henry Ford Community College, in Dearborn, Michigan. Is that correct? Okay.

And again, we will be joined by Congressman Luis Gutierrez, hopefully soon.

After we have heard from our panelists, we're going to open up the session. Perhaps take a short break and then open up the session for questions. And I will ask you to come up to the microphone to answer — or to ask your question.

I'm not really trained, or capable, or prepared to play Phil Donahue, today, so we'll do it the old-fashioned way by bringing you over to the microphone. Okay?

The question we will ask all of our panelists to discuss for a few minutes is this. Please discuss in very tangible terms what elements a community, either urban or rural, elements a community must have in order to be considered viable. And each panelist will speak for about five or ten minutes.

I will try to play traffic cop as nicely as I possibly can, so I'll let you know that I'll give you a little — a few minutes before we have to cut off your microphone, of course, which we won't do.

...we, as a community, have to be very savvy in making use of the potential political power that we have in the numbers.

But I'll just give you an idea. Five or ten minutes on this topic, and then we'll be able to open it for questions.

I'd like to start by just taking it by alphabetical order, if you don't mind. And, again, what elements must a community have in order to be viable. I will ask Maria Teresa Ayala of Chicago, Illinois to begin.

Ms. Ayala: I would like to begin my remarks by noting to you that the organization I work for, the Institute for Latino Progress, is an adult education center, located in the middle of a concentration of approximately 70,000 Mexican-Americans, predominantly Spanish, in the southwest side of Chicago.

It is a community that, in many senses, typifies perhaps the best and the worst of what is conceived of as the Latino or the Hispanic neighborhoods in big cities.

And so my opinion is that — by all the problems that we see and also the possibilities that are present in such an environment.

As other community practitioners, and economic development, and housing practitioners have commented many times, there is a variety of experiments and initiatives, and programs, that little and big organizations start to work on to deal with neighborhood problems. But after we try and discuss it all, and read all the papers about the problems we have, I would say that there is four major elements that are considered essential in insuring viability of a community.

One, first and foremost, it is jobs. Jobs, jobs, jobs, all the time. Not only because we all need a decent wage to live and to support our families, but because work is so tied in with our essential identity as valuable human beings. It is the one most important element that gives us that sense of dignity that allows us to stand up even when we are being put down, facing stereotypes, you know, with the bureaucrats at every level in the system.

...if we don't deal with that major gap in the basic skills that anyone is going to need to get a decent job in this economy, if we don't address that problem, we won't have a reasonable opportunity to make a dent in the rest of our problems.

And it is the one most important element in securing all these other issues that — all these other needs that we identify as essential for survival, that is securing — securing housing.

No matter how much you try to do in terms of creating new housing, we cannot reasonably deal with the problem unless people do have the resources to pay for the housing.

No matter how much we kick around all the issues relating to housing, if people do not have medical and health insurance, if they do not have the dollars to pay for it, for health care, they are only going to be getting piecemeal treatment, patchwork.

When we talk about jobs, I think I'm referring not to the traditional jobs that poor communities have — poor Latino communities have access to, which is low wage, no benefits kind of jobs, I'm talking about the kind of jobs that do give some hope to our people that there will be an advancement, that there will be a point where they can meet all their needs with what they earn at work, that they will be able to meet the needs of their kids as they grow up.

It's the kind of jobs that will not present to them the revolving door, the very discouraging phenomenon that we see in our neighborhoods, where they are pushed around from factory to factory, from employment to unemployment, and back and forth, in that cycle.

But the kind of jobs that represent, as I said, a

future or a career, even within a small company. A future for progress, a sense of progress.

Tied into that, and I think we talked about that, too, is that another very essential element, and that is education.

We can discuss a lot of the problems of the educational problems that our kids have. We are dealing with the fact that governments are pretty much giving up on our kids and saying, "We don't have the money to pay for a basic education, and you go what you can in the cities."

It happens that most of the kids in the schools are minority, and it just so happens that they are in very poor neighborhoods. That is the other very important element that we have to have, and I don't mean only for our kids.

A major problem in our neighborhoods right now is a great proportion of those adults that are in charge of the families, that are in charge of paying the bills for the house, have to pay the taxes, are not making enough money — because they, themselves, don't have the education, and they have no access to the education to speak of. And it's one of the big invisible problems in our communities.

In our neighborhood we have about 63 percent of adults in those neighborhoods that don't have a high school diploma. From 50 to 60 percent of the kids in the high schools are dropping out.

It doesn't matter how much you talk about everything. It is that we have to get — if we don't deal with that major gap in the basic skills that anyone is going to need to get a decent job in this economy, if we don't address that problem, we won't have a reasonable opportunity to make a dent in the rest of our problems.

Culture. One of the things that bombards us most, or that the mainstream bombards us the most with, is the number of stereotypes about what we can do and what we cannot do.

Ideas, in many instances, are internalized in all those negative perceptions about ourselves.

I think that the Latino community is setting precedents in this nation for establishing something very important. And that is that we have a certain cultural identity that gives us a very good vision of what we are, where we come from, and also where we are going to. And that is something very important to hold onto, not only because it is nice to know that we have all that in our background, but also because it is a very important element in helping parents communicate to their children that they are something, that they mean something, that they have a lot to be proud of and a lot to look forward to.

Finally, I would say that the one thing that must and should hold it all together for us as a community, and across the board, across race, across class, across any type of party affiliation, or any other kinds of beliefs, is that we, as a community, have to be very savvy in making use of the potential political power that we have in the numbers.

Right now to me, it's alarming, scandalous, that when we are expected to do in the next ten, 20 years or so, are expected to become the largest minority in this country, the issues faced by minorities, by poor communities, still continue to be framed only in terms of the black and white dialog.

Latinos are invisible in many of these discussions. And in some of these areas, they are among the most suffering communities. We have to get in there and be part of that dialog, because if we're not even seen as part of the communities that need the help, and have needs that need to be addressed, we are not going to be dealt with at all.

And that means affirmative action becomes a zero point for us. It means that access to affordable housing becomes pretty much an exclusion of Latinos.

It means that we really won't have very many places to turn. And in this sense, as communities —as a community, as a national community, we have to learn to use, with wisdom, something that other immigrant communities, other communities in this nation, learned before us, and are doing very well. And that is, as I said, the use of the numbers for the expression of our political power, and for the — the promotion of the recognition of our needs.

And also, the ability to build coalitions with those same — those other communities that are suffering from the same ills that we are.

One of the most alarming things that are happening in this country is that blacks and Latinos have been pitted against each other. And the moment we start replicating those attitudes we are, in fact, cutting ourselves off from what is the largest issue —what should be the major dialog going on, and that is we should not be fighting over the crumbs, we should be fighting to really get to share the resources that we deserve as a community, to really get the resources to educate our children in a decent manner, to really get the jobs that we need to live decently.

So I'll leave with you with those thoughts at this time.

Mr. Gonzales: Thank you. For those of you who came — arrived a little bit late, we are awaiting the arrival of Congressman Luis Gutierrez. We hope he will be able to join us this afternoon.

As you may or may not know, the topic for our discussion is community viability, talking about what elements our communities need in order to remain viable.

One of the most alarming things that are happening in this country is that Blacks and Latinos have been pitted against each other.

We'll hear next from Frank Ballesteros, who is the Executive Director of Micro Industry Credit Rural Organization of Tucson, Arizona.

Mr. Ballesteros: It certainly is a pleasure to be here and, unfortunately, I hate to talk right after lunch because there is a lot of you that are already snoozing off.

We have water up here. I'll try to make it as interesting as possible, so that we can get something.

As some of you heard yesterday, that I —right at

the beginning of the conference, that I'm hoping that we can offer solutions. I'm hoping that I can offer a solution to job creation in our Hispanic neighborhoods.

MICRO is part of Project PEP, a non-profit organization that came about 25 years ago.

Project PEP decided that in our border communities that we were dealing with farm workers and low income people, there was something lacking. We knew that the economy was going down back in the '80s. As far as farmland was concerned, there was no farmers that were really farming the lands, who were losing their farms. And we found a lot of people that were dislocated from the copper mines.

And so there was really nothing for them to do, so we brought in a Third World technology from Third World — from Bangladesh. It is called micro enterprise development, meaning that you are dealing with the very tiniest of businesses in their homes.

It could be a lady that uses her home to —as a day care center. It could be a lady that's doing arts and crafts. Even a lady that's making tamales at her home and she's got her kids selling them. That's a micro enterprise.

It could be a gentleman that has a full-time job that on weekends he likes to fool around with carburetors, and so he charges his friends to bring over his carburetors, and he cleans them.

It could be a farmer that has a little —little farm on the side there and he brings his vegetables, and he brings them into market.

This is micro enterprise development.

MICRO has been around since 1987. We started out with a grant from the Ford Foundation of $200,000.

We must start looking at the jobs. We can't expect manufacturing, we can't expect big business, to come into our towns and hire our people, especially in rural America.

We took $50,000 of that $200,000 to start a revolving loan fund, a micro enterprise revolving loan fund.

This fund is being used then to give — to loan to these small little tiny businesses, loans from $500 to $100, to $15,000.

What is happening with this thing is that we are lending to the poorest of the poor. Some of you do not realize that small businesses cannot go to the bank and get this type of loans.

We're looking at loans of $500, $1,000, $1,500 for the principal purpose of buying working capital. That's where they can buy their inventory. They are using our money. They go up there and buy their inventory.

For example, a lady down in Douglas, Arizona; she's on welfare; she's got three kids. She came up to me, she says, "You know, I want to do something because I want to get off of food stamps. I want to get off of welfare. I want to give a better future for my kids. I want to show them the work ethic. Help me."

She came in there. We gave her $1,000. That afternoon, that lady was on her way to Los Angeles to buy $1,000 worth of dresses.

She went to the markets up there, bought the dresses — new dresses. She brings them into her neighborhood and within hours, those dresses are in the neighborhood's houses, on credit.

...micro enterprise development is an issue that is not going to wait. That's the job future of our communities...

She takes a dress that would sell for $40 and she — and she puts in another $40, and she sells the dress for $80, but she sells it on credit. And she's got a ledger. And these people — and she's at her home — at their homes, constantly, every week, every two weeks, getting her payments.

This is just one. Now the lady is coming to us for a $10,000 loan. She wants to open up a storefront in Douglas, Arizona, and we're going to help her with that. But it wouldn't have been possible without the help of micro enterprise.

Revolving loan funds are approaching this country — there are over 200 micro Enterprise development projects across this country right now.

I hope you all had a chance to take one of these books and read it. This is what is really —this is — we're being studied. We're being dissected. We're being directed. We want to know how this thing works, because micro enterprise development is the wave of the future.

Let me show you what's happening in the country. There are over 24 million strong, generating $382 billion in revenues, and creating an estimated 8,219 new jobs in entrepreneurial positions every day, folks. This is where it is happening.

We must start looking at the jobs. We can't expect manufacturing, we can't expect big business, to come into our towns and hire our people, especially in rural America. There is no such thing as a full-time job anymore. And, unfortunately, whether we like it here or not, we're going to be losing over 800,000 manufacturing jobs. What are these people going to do? We have to start looking at self-employment.

Micro enterprise development is where it's at. The SBA is getting involved in it. The Department of Commerce is getting involved in it. The Department of EDA is getting involved in it.

I have a loan right now — a grant right now from the HHS, Health and Human Services. Half a million dollars for three years, to explore the potential of getting people off of welfare, into self-sufficiency.

There will be no more welfare the way we know it right now next year. We have got to start training these people.

And what makes this program work is the fact that you're giving them technical assistance. Technical assistance is showing them how to take that $1,000,

reinvest it, and then what to do with those profits.

We have to understand that a lot of the people know how to make tamales, know how to make tortillas, but they don't know how to market themselves. They don't know how to expand their markets, but maybe a small community, a 15, 20, 25 mile community, or how to advertise themselves. This is where the technical assistance comes in.

MICRO has been working for seven years. We've loaned out $1.7 million to over 450 tiny businesses in Arizona, of which 85 percent are still active, alive. Our default rate has been less than three percent.

Poor people will pay for their developments. We have just got to give them the opportunity, because the banks aren't going to do it. The banks aren't going to — never are they going to lend a small business — and you know something, we do it on character lending. We do not go on the bottom line.

Character lending is that that person has the tenacity to be able to do something. They are having the mistica — what I call mistica — that they want to be able to do something to provide something for their children. They want to show the children that, "Yes, I can. We can do something."

It is important that we take this micro enterprise development and we work with it.

On any given block, you're going to find four small home-based businesses working out of their homes, out of their garages, out of their living rooms. It is about time we started identifying these people, making them legitimate, because with the MICRO program, after you get your third or fourth loan, we expect you to get licensed.

And we are fighting right now with the planning and zoning commissions. We want them to be licensed at their homes, because they cannot afford a storefront. We have to fight this. This is a fighting battle.

Right now, like I said, there is over 250 programs — and I'm pretty sure that in your areas, you should be able to find some economic development corporations, CVCs, that are lending to these type of businesses. And if they don't, they should be.

And I'm hoping that through this conference here, that you will realize that micro enterprise development is an issue that is not going to wait. That's the job future of our communities, and we have to — we have to start working with them. We cannot be without micro enterprise development because that is going to be the future, folks. That's where we are going to create the jobs.

We are hoping — hoping that this conference here — we'll be here to talk to you about how to set up a revolving loan fund. You can set up a revolving loan fund for as little as $10,000.

Our $10,000 is now $1.4 million. I'm getting money from churches. I'm getting money from insurance companies. I'm getting moneys from the Calvert Social Investment Fund. The Calvert Fund, Charles Stewart Mott — there is plenty of corporations that are willing to give you money, to lend you money.

And surely there is a cost. There is a cost, but we say that Hispanic people will pay for their development. All we are offering them is just an opportunity.

Let's show them we care by helping them help themselves. This is where it's at. Thank you, very much.

Mr. Gonzales: Thank you. I want to resist the temptation to speak and make a comment after every speaker because I think it is more important that we get through their comments and hear from you, and engage in a dialog here.

It is my great pleasure right now to introduce someone who is one of our pioneers in academia.

Dr. Frank Bonilla is the Director of Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños in Hunter College, in New York. Dr. Bonilla.

Dr. Bonilla; I have to actually — I have not been director of the center since January. I stepped down from that job to do — to dedicate more time to a new project, which is the Inter-University Program for Latino Research. And that's a consortium of university-based centers, throughout the United States, that deal with the problems of Latinos.

At this point we have eight universities. I'm centered at Hunter. There are six around the West Coast and the Southwest. Six Mexican-American study centers. And the Florida International University.

Frank had reminded us yesterday that we want to hear more about solutions rather than problems, and of course the academics are notorious for trying to make things sound more complicated than anybody really wants to hear about.

I appreciate very much the work that he has been doing and his observation. I'm not going to be able to report to you on anything as clear cut and well defined as the micro enterprise promotion, though I certainly agree that's an important element of any move toward job recovery and finding a useful place for human resources in our community.

> That initiative combines the resources of six community development corporations, so that the congressional district that has the highest percentage of poverty stricken families has become a prime site for a national demonstration that the most effective channel for putting private and public moneys to work for community recovery are those homegrown agencies with a solid anchorage in the places and people.

But I'm still trying to grapple a little bit with what it is that we mean by community viability. And I want to say a little bit about that.

I think it generally does evoke images of the kind that we've heard from in Chicago. Basically, I've heard, at the community level, having to do with neighborhood activity, tenant's organizations, school PTAs, local groups that are providing educational and social services of some kind to everyone in the community, and of course, political mobilization and some efforts to organize across all kinds of dividing lines.

I think that, in fact, though the last few decades have been devastating economically for Latinos, that we have made tremendous strides on community level organizing, of the kind that we have heard about from the two previous speakers.

...we had to put together a network of academic researchers, and university based people, that pooled the resources of all our communities, and allowed us to look at problems nationally, and internationally, and at the same time respect the differences, the uniqueness, regionally and by national origin, of the — of our groups.

At the center, where I did work for 20 years, we were involved in some initiatives of this kind. And I think we can point with pride to one in particular, which we called the Barrio Popular Education Program.

That began as just as a bilingual literacy project, and has already spun off as an independent, non-profit entity, which is entirely run by the women who were an original part of the project, and whose lives have been entirely transformed by the acquisition of writing skills, and they now do that — services on their own.

And there was an even more dramatic instance that is worth mentioning here, another incident of unified inner city initiative. And that is something called the Comprehensive Community Revitalization Program. That was launched in the Bronx last year.

That initiative combines the resources of six community development corporations, so that the congressional district that has the highest percentage of poverty stricken families has become a prime site for a national demonstration that the most effective channel for putting private and public moneys to work for community recovery are those homegrown agencies with a solid anchorage in the places and people.

These six community based organizations, over the space of just one year, have pulled in tens of millions of dollars into the area. They are providing all kinds of — well, first of all, they have created an enormous stock of housing. Much of that housing is going to be cooperative in nature.

They have opened clinics. They have built parks, playing fields. They have started a number of businesses like the kind that we've been hearing about. And I mentioned this because it seems to me at this point we have really reached a level where what — what we formerly thought of as sort of straightforward, street level organizers, person on person, in the small organizations, now seems to require a complex articulation of skills and resources, that have to reach across from local to municipal, and state, and national resources, and I may even say a little later, even require some sensitivity in engagement with international dimensions of economic restructuring.

I can say as well that the Bronx is, of course, also demographically in the 21st Century, according to the projections that we heard yesterday from Jorge del Pinal.

From 1980 to 1990, the Bronx grew very modestly, about 1.2 million people, but — and that growth was almost all among Latinos, who are now 43 percent of the population in the borough. African-Americans are some 31 percent. Non-Hispanic whites fell slightly to about two percent.

But it is really new Hispanics, Dominicans, Mexicans, and Central Americans, that are bringing in new components into that population.

I want to take a minute for an aside. We heard so much yesterday about the uniqueness historically of this coming together, and especially what we are going to see tomorrow, of Latino — with African-Americans.

And I put up on the table copies of this cover of the pamphlet, and as you will see that it says, "The Tragedy of the Puerto Rican and the Colored American."

The interesting thing about this pamphlet is that it was published in 1935. And it was published on the occasion of the first minority/majority assembly district of New York City, where Puerto Ricans and African-Americans set out to join forces in order to generate some change in the political system.

And I want to read to you a couple of items in which they are, in effect, doing self-criticism about why it was so hard to reach across and pull together an effective coalition.

The first one — and I'll just read two or three of them. They did a very thorough job of self-criticism.

But they say, "The Puerto Rican and colored American voters of the district are divided against themselves, whereas they should be solidly united as one mass of voters.

"Prejudice, jealousy, and pessimism, sectarianism, and individualism have predominated among their leaders; ever divided, showing lack of political knowledge, vision, pact, and interest in solving our problems.

"The vast majority of their intellectuals and professionals have neglected the specific duty owed to the community.

"Their enemies have the experience and knowledge of using their effective weapons — violence and drugs.

"No impartial person can deny that we have many competent — that are willing to assume positions of leadership in the cities, but the facts show that they have been ignored."

I think that communities need to be commercially viable in order — or commercially active, in order to be viable.

And I go through all of this because, as I said, I think that the tragedy that they are talking about, the obstacles to Puerto Rican and African-American unity in that district were, with three-fourths of the registered voters being minority, the democratic machine, dominated by Irish and Italian forces, were able to thwart any candidate, or transformation in the district for ten years.

So we've been in this battle for a very long time. And I think that it does help bring home the meaning of the historic — tomorrow.

Finally, I want to talk to you, briefly, about this inter-university project that I mentioned, because I think it is another one of these things which shows the complexities — we need to establish.

We established the Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños, in New York, 20 years ago, in a time when we knew that it was needed for us to be present in many other parts of the country, as the population dispersed. But we knew that we were not going to have the resources to go — every place where there was a concentration of Puerto Ricans. And we decided that we had to put together a network of academic researchers, and university based people, that pooled the resources of all our communities, and allowed us to look at problems nationally, and internationally, and at the same time respect the differences, the uniqueness, regionally and by national origin, of the — of our groups. And that is what we have been doing.

So that I guess my word is that the good news — that the good news over the last ten or 15 years is that we have, in fact, gained this kind of organizational, political, and demographic resources that we now have in place, or are within reach, establishment of the intellectual and political network.

And at the same time, I think, it is far more visible to us that we need to reach beyond our communities, beyond as full understanding of the national issues, and also think globally, that we need to — as Jeremy Brecker, who has just published a book on global visions for the emancipation of poor neighborhoods said, "Act locally, and think globally." And to me, very succinct, that means not just free trade, but for economic freedom, but full employment. And we'll talk a little more about what that really implies.

Not just freedom of movement of capital, but immigrant and human rights. Not just free traffic in technology, but improved work place, and community conditions — living conditions. Thank you.

Mr. Gonzales: Thank you, Dr. Bonilla. I think you probably left us at a very good point to introduce our next speaker.

Her name is Katherine Donato, and she is the Assistant Professor of Sociology at Louisiana State University.

Ms. Donato: Thank you. Thanks to the caucus for inviting me.

My approach to this issue of community viability is to focus on employment opportunities.

I think that communities need to be commercially viable in order — or commercially active, in order to be viable.

And for about the last four to six years, I've been doing — engaged in research with — at the University of Chicago. And we have been examining recent trends, which unfortunately — recent trends in the employable of minority men and women in the United States. And unfortunately, these trends suggest quite a bleak picture.

I'm not going to go into all the problems. But I am going to just sketch them briefly, so that then I can talk about solutions in a more informed way.

As well, I'm not sure that everybody really understands or, at least, knows briefly what some of the problems are.

The picture is bleak. It's a picture of worsening employment prospects, and increasing ethnic inequality in the United States since 1960.

For example, Latino workers, men and women, have become more different from whites in the effect that education has on labor force activity, or participation in the labor force.

Puerto Rican and Mexican women, for example, are, on an average, more likely to have low levels of education than other race and ethnic groups. And for Puerto Ricans, this means less labor market activity, considerably less, than blacks, and whites — than black or white women.

Latino workers, especially Puerto Ricans, again, appear quite vulnerable to macro level economic changes, such as economic contraction, economic down turns, even if they occur within short periods of time. Even with a college education, for example, Puerto Ricans have been increasingly penalized since 1960. So that they need more education than whites to be as active in the labor force as whites.

The picture is bleak. It's a picture of worsening employment prospects, and increasing ethnic inequality in the United States since 1960.

And finally, in addition to greater differentiation, based on color and ethnicity, and more employment uncertainty nationwide, the work prospects of black, and especially Puerto Rican men, worsened in New York State, especially in the metropolitan New York area, meaning that Puerto Rican men were less employable, relative to other groups with comparable skills.

This occurred exactly when — again, since 1960 — exactly when New York's industrial base reorganized or restructured, creating what some people argue is a mismatch between the skills demanded and the skills supplied in that labor market.

So these are some of the problems in general terms. But if they are the problems, then what is required to solve them so that communities, both rural and urban, can be viable, or can remain viable.

And I think that there are two — two things we need to address.

The first one involves the changes, and they could be major, that come through legislation. These changes could emphasize affirmative action.

Research suggests — research coming out of the University of Wisconsin, suggests that affirmative action works, and that it neutralizes some of the effects of discrimination, and some of the effects of color, that we see playing out in our labor markets in the United States.

Secondly, legislative changes should involve issues of education and job skills for everyone. The very low educational attainment of Puerto Ricans and Mexicans

means that we must improve the access and quality of the public schools in our very own neighborhoods, and pay attention to creative ways to insure full attendance in schools, by using the resources of parents, neighborhoods, the schools themselves, including not only the schools the children attend, but the schools that adults attend, meaning higher education, and corporate sponsors.

Achieving full employment is not a cause of the left or the right. It is a bipartisan agenda in the national interest, but it has not been recognized as such. And until we do so, our communities will be threatened.

And finally legislative changes should moderate dramatic changes in local labor markets —dramatic economic changes. And those are the kinds of changes we can see in the last decade or two.

Those legislative changes should involve job retraining, job creation, and loans to small businesses, that was talked about earlier.

It's necessary to insure that the unemployed, right, the people looking for work, don't get discouraged and leave the labor market. And estimates of discouraged workers have just increased — have increased in the last two decades.

In the last eight months alone — I think this was published either — in one of the papers this morning, as I read it — we have lost over 400,000 jobs in the last eight months of this year. And this job loss has been occurring in the last several years. And as we continue to lose jobs at this level, we are continuing to lose workers as productive members of society. And I think we're losing them because, indeed, as most of us might know, jobs — searching for a job is a difficult thing. It's often times a debilitating thing if it goes on for months and years. Okay. So legislative changes, I think, are important. But in addition — or, in fact, I would argue — some might disagree — more important than legislative changes is political will.

In the past, few employment policies have supported government intervention — at the federal, or the state, or at the local levels, few employment policies have supported intervention in the economy. And I think that's because we don't yet have the political will.

If we did, then we would have the funds for adequate research, including longitudinal data, so that we can identify the issues, and really, truly understand the causes of these problems. And we would also have the legislative measures that we need to solve the problems.

Achieving full employment is not a cause of the left or the right. It is a bipartisan agenda in the national interest, but it has not been recognized as such. And until we do so, our communities will be threatened.

Mr. Gonzales: Virginia Ramirez is our next speaker. She is the Co-Chairperson of COPS, San Antonio Communities Organized for Public Service.

Ms. Ramirez: We're not part of the police. Okay?

I was very happy this morning to hear about — Janet Reno talk about after school programs. And in San Antonio last year we had 20 after school programs.

We got a commitment from the mayor. Now we have 60. And then we got a extra commitment to go to 200 for next year, so that's — so we were very happy to hear that that's something we're working on.

I'm just going to give you a little bit of an idea of our organization.

I'm Virginia Ramirez, and I'm the Co-Chair of Communities Organized for Public Service, COPS.

COPS is a community/church based organization; it is nonpartisan; based in 27 churches, and we represent over 60,000 Hispanics in the west, the south, in the inner city in San Antonio, Texas.

COPS is a member of the Industrial Areas Foundation, a national network of broad- based, multi-ethnic, interfaith organizations, in primarily poor and lower income communities.

We have 30 organizations and we represent over one million families in the United States and the United Kingdom.

The central role of COPS, in the IAF organization, is to organize, develop, and empower people how interest can affect their lives.

We — on one-to-one relationships. What we teach is the value of public, like our self-interest, and that is very important to us.

Also, we also teach them what a good definition of politics is. A lot of times our people don't understand politics. They think politicians.

And so what we teach our people is that politics is about people being participants in making decisions on the issues that affect their lives.

We also teach them about power analysis. We also teach them about respecting and understanding of power institutions, so it is not us against them. It is us working together, and that is very important.

...legislative changes should involve issues of education and job skills for everyone.

For poor people to conform the institution — to confront the institution of society, while we have found — is to form institutions based through our churches. This is something that is new in the Hispanic community.

What we have learned of value is that we have to deal with each other as public persons. We have had to deal with our public and our private lives. That's very important.

In a sense, the goal is a licensed self interest. Our goal is to form leaders with enlightened self interest. That is a goal we are trying to do in the COPS organization.

These issues are very important. But more importantly, is the opportunity to develop leaders and also their self competence.

Let me give you an example of the kind of work that we do as organizations.

What we have done in housing — what we have done in housing and policy decision, that works best in our community forum — existing housing standard in our community was in very poor condition. So we put a lot of emphasis on affordable housing.

In the early 1930s and 1940s, some developers came into our communities and built what we call the type of shotgun houses of tar and black paper, and black tar paper.

By the 1970s, they were some of the most blighted areas in the City of San Antonio. What we did, we organized our people and we went to the City of San Antonio and we asked them to assign our worst areas as select housing project areas.

What we did, we asked them that we needed the community development block grant funds. And so, you know, what happened is that we were able to completely remove the blighted — communities and build 1,000 units.

We also have the Niameyer Housing Project in the Brooklyn, in the Bronx, and in New York. These Brooklyn congregations have built over 3,000 new single-family homes for working families, renewing completely devastated neighborhoods.

This was possibly because the broad based church organizations, under the auspices of the IAF leverage, lent — tax abatement — and tax abatement on cities — City of New York. They also had no interest construction financing for the religious institutions.

Each home carries an interest-free city second mortgage of $15,000 as a lien against — you know, repayable if the house is sold. We have similar projects in Baltimore, Maryland.

One of the most interesting things that we have done in San Antonio is that we have developed a job program called Project Quest.

What happened in San Antonio, and I know it is happening all over the nation, we are losing, or we have lost, our manufacturing companies, and we now just heard a lot of people talk about this today. They paid good wages that have become now nonexistent.

What happened in San Antonio is that from one day to the next, the Levi's plant company closed its doors, leaving 1,000 people out of work.

People in our communities that were self supporting, who were taxpayers. These were people who were hard workers, but had very little education. And these jobs are becoming nonexistent.

We need to educate and train our people on jobs that exist today. So we developed Project Quest.

We worked with the governor, the mayor, and the business community, you know, to develop Project Quest.

The secret of our Project Quest is that it is not just a job-creating program, because people are given a — for themselves.

The involvement of the business community — involvement of the business community, and they have clashed with jobs up front, jobs that pay a living wage.

And then what makes Project Quest unique is that there is a job, not only before the training starts, but also there is a job when they finish their training.

Since the viability of our community is dependent on people, organized for their common self interests, the viability of our community depends on educating our people about participating in the day-to-day policies of their lives.

...we teach our people is that politics is about people being participants in making decisions on the issues that affect their lives.

The viability of our community depends on the cooperation and respect between government agencies, businesses, corporations, and the citizens of our communities.

The COPS organization and our sister organizations, through the IAF, are an example of such viability and the promotion of our Judeo-Christian values for the benefit of our public lives. It has given hope to our communities and ownership.

I, myself, have been given hope for the future of our families. What we are doing in this kind of organization is that we're not leaving a legacy of neglect for our children. We are leaving a legacy of hope. Thank you.

Mr. Gonzales: Thank you. Our final speaker, and then we'll open this up for questions and a dialog, is Gary Sagansky, who is the Director of Corporate Training at the Henry Ford Community College in Dearborn, Michigan.

Mr. Sagansky: What I'd like to do is briefly describe a case study of a project that we undertook in the Dearborn/Detroit area, that involves a major form of important employment, and that is industrial skilled trades.

As many of the other panelists have mentioned, the quality of the job is very important to analyze. And in the case of Detroit, in an industrial manufacturing economic base, the skilled trades play a very important role in the chain of good quality jobs. Just to give you a brief background on this, there were roughly 4,000 apprentices in the program that we had at our community college, just some ten years ago.

Today there were roughly, or I shouldn't say today — I'd say two years ago, that number was down to about 1,200 people. And there was a very strong sense that there were major problems with the education that apprentices were receiving, both in terms of at the community college, but also in terms of their formation at the industrial plants at which they worked.

There was a sense in general that the problem was shared all around, that it was some problems to do with the companies, as well as problems that would arise from bargaining agreement, as well as problems in the actual class work that people performed.

Of course, overriding all of this is the general declining economic base, or declining manufacturing base, in our region.

So we had to take a very hard look at this issue. And we realized that it would be an important first step to try and redefine what it is that was changing in the work place, and then what are the jobs that

people need to perform, and from that, what are the skills that they need to know.

To do that, you had to take a step back and have a kind of a long-term view of what's changing, in terms of technology, in terms of how people are working, in terms of the organizational relationships that exist between unions and management, and schools.

We did take the time to take that step back. What I think is very important to mention and it is something that I'd like to reiterate and echo throughout the time today, is to say that the process that we followed, I think, is key.

That is to say that, who the stake holders are that you identify to help define the agenda of the problem; what is the process that you use to develop, to bring those stake holders together; what are the roles that they play, are all essential things to think through at the onset, as well as to continue to think through — through the life, of taking a look at a particular problem.

So we did take a step back. And who we had at that table, who we had as the stake holders there, were the members of the skilled trades themselves. These were all — I won't say entirely UAW represented employees, but to a large degree. They came from all of the large auto plants in the metro area that the UAW — Chrysler and Ford — and included dozens of small supplier firms. Some are unionized and some are not.

Since the viability of our community is dependent on people, organized for their common self interests, the viability of our community depends on educating our people about participating in the day-to-day policies of their lives.

Also at that table were future skilled trades, or apprentices. That table was large and round, and it also definitely had to have space there for people from the companies, and from the companies we needed people from operations, from engineering, as well as from the training or human resource area.

It also included educators who needed to be there to understand and assimilate the information to transform that curriculum.

So with that cast, a series of discussions were held over about a six month period, probably about 300 different people were involved in the discussions about how the auto plants were changing, what were the new skills that the skilled trades needed to have.

And from that a general consensus emerged as to what is the new role, or the involving role, of the skilled trades employees.

It was a very important experience to take the time to build the bridges, to be able to have that dialog. It took us into places that we never experienced in the community college employee, and I worked in organizing education projects.

But what I found myself doing often was working more like an economic developer, or an organizer, to bring the parties together, who weren't discussing these issues, around the same table.

On more than one occasion, we would have, at the conclusion of one of these meetings, that was talking about some specific set of skills, for instance, the skills that industrial electricians need to have, we would finish the discussion and a person from the training department of one of the major companies would stand up and say, "You know, I didn't think I could come to a meeting with Chrysler and GM, and these other folks, sitting around and talk about these kinds of issues. This used to be considered proprietary information. But it was very enlightening to be there, and I actually" — this is paraphrasing this person from the corporation — "I learned a lot about training and education, and what's happening in my company, and what my company needs, because so much of what we're seeing out there, we're all analyzing a little differently. We all have slightly different resources, and are trying different things."

So as an educator, we found ourselves actually helping business organize and figure out what their needs are. That's probably one of the most important lessons that we learned throughout this process.

It's also similar that — that that process of having companies come together to define what their employee skill needs are, is something that's used in almost every country. I think in every country that has a successful human resource development policy. For instance, in Germany, there are associations that companies are mandated to belong to, where these kinds of issues are discussed on a regular basis.

So going further, we also found, through this process, that while the union played a very important role in apprentice decisions, we found that in creating this process, and going through it, that the union —the definition of the union was broadened, in the sense that the union's role was not only at the table with companies to discuss large policy issues, but the union had a very important role in organizing the work force level participation in this process. They were the people who could help us find the right skilled trades to sit down at the table, to talk about specific skill needs. So the definition of who the union was and what their role was was greatly expanded.

Now, in going through this effort, we found also that within education, that the problem at hand, the problem that we were attempting to solve, went beyond simply trying to find the new correct lesson plans.

It involved we in education changing what our role is. It changed partly by organizing this effort, but it also changed how we teach, and how we put together content.

And to just try to summarize that in a short period, I'd say that in the case of this project, what we find is is that educators wind up playing the role that is much less being the sole expert in a classroom, and instead they take on the role of becoming a facilitator, and the resource for people to learn in the classroom.

And the other side of that equation is, how does it change what students need to do and know. And

what we found there is that in the new process, much more of the responsibility of learning was put right into the hands of the learners, right at the onset. And that we were responsible to provide the tools, but it was then the responsibility of the learner to take a hold of those tools and embrace them, and then explore those areas.

...within a work place, the work force itself represents a kind of a community.

Now, it's a difficult process. One important kind of learning theory perspective, as far as the students goes, is that we need to work from where people are at.

There were comments made in all of the education panels today that the curriculum works best when it speaks to where people are at today, to the environment, and to the world that they know.

And that's the same exact truth in work-based education. You must plug into the framework of knowledge and experience that the students have. And it's not an easy thing to get to, but it can be achieved, and we're exploring that and facing that challenge every day.

I say, in summary, that some of the things that we are taking from this, and that I think would be important to mention at this important conference, is that the word "community" can be explored in a couple of ways. And the role of the community in education and community viability can be seen better in that context.

And what I mean to say by that is is that within a work place, the work force itself represents a kind of a community. All the different players within an organization need to be at the table when you are looking at large changes within a business, or an industry. They need to be there to get their interests out, and to get their perspective in, which will be their part of the solution.

At another level, at a larger level, at a political level, beyond the single program or industry, you can take a look at the term "community," and you can say that we're in a new age where these large changes required that the community exert its force and its power in helping the public sector to redefine what it is it does.

As a public sector institution, any organization, you get into a familiar way of working, and you sometimes need help to jog yourself into a new place. You may want to go there, but you also need that extra little incentive and support to make those kind of changes happen.

And so it's important for everyone here to actively engage their public sector representatives in their own communities to become involved and ask the hard questions about are programs working in economic development. What are the real results? Do you have all the stake holders at the table? If they are not all there, you're not going to have a long-term solution.

So it's essential for community to be active in any kind of a solution, I think, in today's economy. And I'd like to close with that.

Mr. Gonzales: Thank you.

When I was given this assignment to moderate this panel, I had been told that at this point we could move for a short break, so that people could get refreshed, get a sip of water or something.

But it occurred to me, while the people were talking, that since so many people have traveled far to come here to participate in these two days of events —three days, I should say — that we have a lot of serious business to discuss, and that we shouldn't waste any time.

We have a microphone here. Its purpose is twofold; one to amplify your remarks, so everyone can hear it; and two, so that the people who are taking notes or transcribing this event can hear everything perfectly.

Unfortunately, the cable is kind of limited to being in that spot. So I'm just going to ask you to, you know, self select yourselves, and go to the microphone and then to begin this dialog.

Some of the things that you've heard about, I would just like to kick off — you can get off onto other things that you heard. Some of the things that come back to me are jobs as the basis of community maintenance, the need for coalition building, job development, how one goes about marketing ones own skills, self-employment, and the bottom line being self reliance.

Dr. Bonilla talked about solutions and not problems. If we can talk more about solutions and find other models that our communities might be able to emulate, I'm sure that a lot of people here would like to hear about those experiences.

...the union's role was not only at the table with companies to discuss large policy issues, but the union had a very important role in organizing the work force level participation in this process.

The need for revitalization, the idea that there should be enlightened self-interest, which is one of my favorite topics, and I'll get into that a little bit later.

A very provocative statement, I thought, is that full employment is a bipartisan agenda, which runs counter to my own experience, but I'd like to hear more about that, to see people agree, and I believe that this is a — this is actually a possible principle.

The need in this changing global economy for more cooperation between corporations and communities, cooperation within or between corporations.

And finally, responsibility. Responsibility of the learner, as Mr. Sagansky pointed out, to embrace and to explore.

I wish that someone would go to the microphone, so that I could shut up, but I hope for your participation.

Mr. Taylor: I'm Paul Taylor, the State Legislator from New Mexico and I have probably talked too much during the other sessions.

But let me say first, Mr. Gonzales, that it is good to see your face and hear your voice. I traveled from Las

Cruces, in the southern part of New Mexico, to Sante Fe on a regular basis and listen to NPR, and it is very good to see you and speak to you.

I would like to say to Mr. Ballesteros, I see what he's talking about with regard to solutions. And it seems that the cities should be more responsive to the kinds of things that you're doing with your micro enterprise development. And the data you have collected, I may wish to go to the legislature with some of that data and maybe even you, as a witness, to talk about some of these things that the people, particularly in the southern part of the state, may do. I'd like to just say that I was a participant, more of a listener, as the Secretary of Health from the state of New Mexico came to various parts of the state to listen. And it was very encouraging to me to see a large group of people who were there because of the work mainly of the church, some of these priests who were here, mainly through the church, who had taken a great risk with some of their parishioners throughout the state in trying to promote the dignity that the people deserve by speaking out regarding community needs.

One of them was in the village of Sandia Park, where the people, by pulling together, were able to move an incinerator — a medical incinerator — from the community. And it was only because those people were given the sense of the leadership of the diocese in order to do this.

And I think this was very evident as the people from the various communities came to speak at health hearings.

And the interesting part of it was that these people came and they prefaced their remarks by saying, you know, "I'm really very ignorant. I don't speak well." It was almost a put down for themselves, and then they came forth with these brilliant ideas.

...we think of community empowerment as getting more funds, getting more funds to do a lot of things. And I think it is very important, what Mr. Sagansky was saying, in terms of looking at the process through which we're establishing programs, and who really are the stake holders.

At the end of the session, they asked if I had anything to say. I was the only legislator there, and I said, "In the first place, don't put yourselves down. You are not ignorant people. You are articulate. You are articulate in promoting the needs of your community and you have done it very well."

I think that we need that kind of spirit going on in the community. Someone has to start it.

In this case, I think it was the diocese of Las Cruces, under the leadership of Bishop Ramirez, who some people think may be a little too liberal, but he suits the needs of the people very well.

The only thing I really want to add to this — I have a lot of things to add, but in the interest of time — I think the community colleges need to work much more closely with the public schools. Public schools do not have the means for the vocational training as much as they should have.

And I think it is through the collaboration of the public schools and community college that we can bring the community the essential elements of training that people need. Not only do they bring that, the elements of training, in terms of the vocational experience, and technical experience, they are the ones who bring adult education to the community in the way of language development, in the way of citizenship programs, and other programs that adults need. Thank you for the opportunity.

Mr. Gonzales: Thank you, Mr. Taylor. Another — unless someone on the panel wants to address what Mr. Taylor has said.

Go ahead.

Ms. Ulloa: My name is Roxanna Ulloa and I'm here on behalf of the American Physical Therapists —but I'm also a member of the Mt. Pleasant community. I live in Washington, D.C.

And I guess I want to address the issue of community viability in light of what Mr. Sagansky said, regarding the process through which our communities become empowered.

After the 1991 Mt. Pleasant disturbances, I became very involved in the community. And one of the things that I've seen is that we think of community empowerment as getting more funds, getting more funds to do a lot of things. And I think it is very important, what Mr. Sagansky was saying, in terms of looking at the process through which we're establishing programs, and who really are the stake holders.

I sat on the board, and the thing that became fashionable after the riot was, "Do you know a Salvadoran that I can have on my board?"

And, you know, one of the things that really struck me is that we talk a lot about making states accountable, and having states address our needs, but how are we, as community based organizations, looking to meet the needs of our community.

I think that our community has become a lot more sophisticated and we need community based organizations that begin to deliver services in a more efficient manner, and who really do have community input in terms of how they monitor their organizations. I think we need more administrators who are from the community, and we need more members on boards who are community members.

So that's what my concerns are about it. A lot of times — I'm not really popular when I say that, but I think we really do need to look within our community based organizations. And just getting a lot of funds to do a lot of projects is not going to get us out of the problems that we're in.

Ms. Ayala: I'm in total agreement with that. Attempts in certain community based organizations — in the neighborhood — an excuse not to do something that we should.

However, I think that anybody who works in the neighborhoods now is realizing also that another feature that — is that the groundwork of the community based organizations that are taking the responsibilities for the programs that the state is walking away from, and taking the responsibility to deliver major services,

with very few resources, are really getting caught in the trap of serving as the justification for doing services whichever way, because the bottom line is the resources are not there.

And so I think there is two roles for this —one is the professionalization of the operations. But also, keeping that distance to be able to negotiate the situations so that when, in fact, it is the obligation of the state to deliver the services, because the resources are there, you push the state.

When it is something that we can do in the neighborhoods, which is primarily our own demonstration projects, where we can get creative and deal with them in a scale small enough that it is manageable, then doing that. Do the things that we do best at that level, but avoiding also getting caught up in helping, in a way, the states washing its hands of the responsibility.

Mr. Crespo: My name is Santos Crespo, Local 372 of AFSCME. And I sort of feel like the agitator or the gentleman years ago that used to pay somebody to just agitate.

From hearing the presenters, you all have done a tremendous amount of hard work, and have definitely taken the community — to economically establish them and continue to make them viable.

But I am sort of taken aback a little because I was hoping that there was a piece of legislation that is going to be taken up shortly — sometime in December. And I'm addressing the whole issue of the North American Free Trade Agreement, which is going to have an impact on our communities.

So I'm asking what are your thoughts on that because based on what you have presented, there is a strong possibility that you sort of roll the stone up the hill and are ready to take it over the top, and it is going to roll right back down.

Mr. Gonzales: NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement, would anyone like to take it on?

Mr. Ballesteros: Well, I'll take it on. I guess it is one of the most controversial issues that we can think of right now.

Obviously, there is going to be losers and there's going to be winners.

I think what we have to do is to eliminate as much of the losers as possible. How do we identify, first of all, who are going to be the losers?

Are the people that are working right now in manufacturing jobs, are they going to be the losers? Well, of course, they are.

Are the people that are living in the border communities, that are looking forward to something out there, that might be the winners? They might be.

I think what it really boils down to is it is not necessarily is who is going to win, and who is going to lose, but looking at it for the future, that this agreement has to be looked at in the five, six, seven year area of time.

Of course there's going to be losers. But we have to start looking at the future of this, whether it's affecting in — as we already know, manufacturing in this country is — it's a done deal. It's gone.

How do we get manufacturing back to this country to support those people that are working in those jobs? And those people that are working in those jobs, are they — are the salaries sufficient enough to sustain self-sufficiency, or is it just going to be creating another — another low-end jobs, again continuing them. We have to look at that.

Unfortunately, I don't have the answers. I wish I did. But certainly we have to look at the losers and try to look at that to how best we can curtail that as much as possible.

Dr. Bonilla: I've been part of a group that's been meeting for several months — well, actually a little longer — to try to get some sense of the impact on various working sectors, and various regions, and various industries, and so on, of the agreement, as it is presently framed.

One of the strands in this debate, and it is a debate, as we were told on the first day by Congressman Serrano, that this is an issue that divides the caucus, and therefore they are a little cautious about the framework of the question it raised.

...we need community based organizations that begin to deliver services in a more efficient manner, and who really do have community input in terms of how they monitor their organizations. I think we need more administrators who are from the community, and we need more members on boards who are community members.

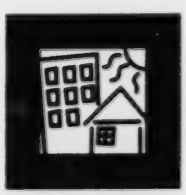
NAFTA, on the one hand, has presented us all with something inevitable, that the changes in global economy, and the collapse of any rival schemes for industrialization, and integration of the — of the hemisphere, that these processes are so strong and driven by so many powerful interests, that there is nothing really to do but accept the plan as it is and then try to make some adjustments along the way.

The evidence that is supposed to be based on serious study of the implication dimensions are all very flaky. Basically, no one can say with great assurance of what the outcomes will be, how long it will take for them to manifest themselves, what the ultimate balance will be, and so on.

In fact, a whole lot of the support and demand for it is now based on the idea that really the impacts are not going to be so great, so there is no point in worrying that much about it, which is, to me, even more frustrating because then they are not even promising that there are going to be any breakthroughs that will help workers in our country or in Mexico.

Here again, we get into controversial territory. It is very clear that there are very powerful interests in Mexico that are determined to sell the plan, to move for its approval, and to make social capital, and political capital, of the presence of the Mexican community here in the U.S. to drive it through.

I have worked on this, principally, from a Puerto Rican perspective, not in terms of proposing or questioning the impact of the pact on Puerto Rico itself, but trying to say, what can we learn from Puerto Rico's experience about the promise of this kind of device, since it really is an extension, or resurrection, or reincarnation of Operation Bootstrap, a device of 936 corporations,



supposedly, to develop Puerto Rico and other parts of the Caribbean.

We know, very clearly, what the results of that has been, some 40, 50 years down the line. Puerto Rico has, of course, made some major strides, but at this point — in 1940, these 936 corporations — were put in place, we were told that by 1970 or '75, Puerto Ricans would have at least the per capita income of the poorest state in the Union. That was then Mississippi.

How do we get manufacturing back to this country to support those people that are working in those jobs?

And in 1990, we are still as far, relatively, from Mississippi, in terms of average earnings, and of course with much higher levels of unemployment, discouraged workers, and actual exclusions from the work force.

Those arrangements have created a situation in which now the Federal Government, the Department of the Treasury, are questioning the very privileges that are now being extended within the NAFTA agreement to —its movement and are being taken away from Puerto Rico because over the long run, they have cost the National Treasury more than a straight welfare state operation, that corporations are now — these 936 so-called corporations — are in the '90s, they have created about 1,000 jobs a year. They, according to a Department of the Treasury analysis, pharmaceuticals will take back, in tax concessions, about $77,000 for every job created, which was in '90.

So there is some very troubling kinds of consequences that one can see in that instance and that are, by no means, clearly forestalled in the agreement, as it is now written, in addition to all the other questions about the guarantees to workers' rights, so that the state of political democracy in Mexico itself, the sponsor by which the process by which this — has been brought into being by the — universities that are guiding and looking into this, and so on.

But I think it is really a very problematic thing. And I mentioned that international dimension of community viability because I think it is increasingly salient and not just Mexico reaching out to make political capital, as I have said, and to establish relationships with its communities here, because it goes beyond this NAFTA, although that happens to be the thrust at this moment.

But the Puerto Rican government, similarly, has been reaching out to the community here, and mobilized Puerto Ricans to, in the United States, to defend the 936 corporations, that we have the 1,000 signatures from Puerto Ricans around the country to save those corporations.

At the same time they are planning to put aside and saying Puerto Ricans in the U.S. really don't have any right to vote on the future of their country.

So there are a lot of contradictions in these international dimensions for each of our national origin groups. And what happens in the community, especially on things like this micro enterprise and so on. How much of that money is being sent back to countries — not just in support of the — but in support of relatives — we have a lot to offer.

Mr. Gonzales: Excuse me.

Mr. Ballesteros: Go ahead.

Mr. Gonzales: I was just going to ask if someone else on the panel wanted to take on the issue of NAFTA.

We can come back to that. I'm sure there's plenty to say. I've got a couple of points I'd like to make on NAFTA, too.

I just want to kind of bring this back to the whole issue about community viability. And right now, what are some of the models that are being used so that we can have some type of structured economic viability in our communities, and some type of power that we can yield at a local level.

Mr. Ramirez: My name is Raul Pardo Ramirez, from — California.

I'm here in Washington because I'm also interested — economic development and utilizing the resources that are available here in Washington, but also in my local community, to make sure that we can provide the necessary jobs and have the necessary infrastructure to continue to prosper. And this is something that I wanted to bring back because I heard some interesting things up here, and there's some interesting literature.

But how do we coordinate that into a model where we're actually going to start focusing on the issues of housing, education, training, and economic viability to sustain the tax base that's going to create opportunities in our communities.

And I think what we have here, as far as the models of working as the local community, where we know that the cities are cutting back because of cutbacks in different areas of the staff, that for Latinos in the past have been disenfranchised from the process of planning and getting involved in committees, there are going to be needs for organizations like COPS to — to leverage power, okay, to get in there and say, "We want to be a part of the process."

How do they do that? What I've known is they have created non-profit organizations like community development corporations to deal with issues like housing, because if people don't have a stable place to live, and a decent place to live, they can't — the community can't grow. So that's one of the issues.

The other issues like working with the community colleges and getting job training from vocational — moneys that a lot of the states control, and they distribute down, so that community colleges could work with the local industries to do economic studies.

We're talking about a change in world economy. NAFTA is a part of that. We have models, we have historians, that can give us the explanation of how things work and how things didn't work.

But what are we doing? We know, for one thing, in my community, in the Los Angeles County area, we have problems with — well, some people think we have problems — I think it's a problem in a different way.

They are calling street vendors, and they are saying that they are being victimized because they are being enforced and taken — they are working. We just don't have — the problem that we have is creating a marketplace for them. You know, creating mercados. You know, put them out there and get them to work and to sustain this economic viability, you know, to promote it.

So there's ways, but we have to put policy together and get the different institutions together, and to tap resources here through HUD, and through Health and Human Services, CSBG branch, things of that nature. How can we package these things to get things done?

So in that sense, I'm hearing about micro enterprises. I've been reading about that. $500 to $1,000 isn't going to do it. We've got to get the Community Reinvestment Act, and the local banks to put 5,000, 7,000, 15,000, 20 to 25 thousand. And the only way they're going to do that is to get the poor in communities into affordable housing, one or two years they'd have a mortgage and have some equity in their homes, and they can be like everybody else in this country, and leverage it out and pay back into a fund, giving it to community development corporations that are non-profits and work with the city to create a plan of economic opportunity.

So that's my — how I see what's going on there. Now, if any of you can speak to the issues or examples like that, where you've been a part of a concerned communities, I'd like to hear more about that.

Mr. Gonzales: You are the mayor of where?

Mr. Ramirez: The City of — California.

Mr. Gonzales: Thank you.

Ms. Ramirez: I mean — say a lot of the things that we have done in San Antonio. One of the things that we have done in San Antonio is to bring affordable housing — or community development — are very important. Pretty soon no one — going to have that anymore.

So one of the things that we did as a community based organization is that we work with the City of San Antonio on a housing trust fund. And what we did at that time, you know, as everybody was talking about — what we did was, we put it together. We asked the City of San Antonio — we, as the community, developed the whole — you know, the whole mission of what it was supposed to do, number one.

And, number two, we understand that if people don't have money, it's not going to work. You can 100 strategies, but without money it does not work.

So what we did, we organized ourselves. We have 500 people in our meetings, and we told the mayor of San Antonio — a major cable company in San Antonio that the money was forwarded to the city.

And so what we did with the mayor is that we said we want $10 million for the housing trust fund and — you know, bring affordable housing. So we were able to bring those, you know, $10 million into our communities.

What we do is, we only use the interest. We use it — it's about a million dollars a year, and so we develop very, very strategic, you know, housing projects for our communities. And so we insure, because we're there on top of our representatives to insure that that money comes into our community, and so we get developers to come in and build affordable housing.

And so that might be one of the strategies that you might be able to use.

Dr. Bonilla: I just want to mention — I mentioned this comprehensive community revitalization program that was started in the Bronx. Here's some details about it that I can show you. It's kind of —there's a lot going on there.

But, basically, it's combining community based organizations that can deal with all the —basically it's a mini-government — area, and reach out for funding there by planning foundations involved in this effort, and it's a national demonstration project. Four or five like it —

Mr. Sagansky: I'd just like to briefly say, my presentation was offering one type of a scenario of a structure and potential models. Where you have existing institutions, both community based and business practicing, and the public sector, that are there, they should be tapped first, I think, in any economic development strategy. And you work them to the greatest extent possible.

I hope everyone grabs a copy of this. It's an on-campus publication of the American Federation of Teachers that highlighted the program I described here today, mostly because it talks about teachers, unionized teachers, dealing with the question of their own upbringing. This is not a typical issue that you'll find in education, especially from a union person's point of view.

Their own — what happens in their classrooms is their business, the rights of the academic. And this model forced educators to take a new kind of a role, but done within their union.

You've got to use the existing structures, if you can. And if you can't, then you find some reasons to work around them.

Dr. Niño: I am Dr. — Niño. I am the Director of the — programs, for the Food and Drug Administration, here in Washington, D.C.

And I must confess that I have been listening to you very carefully for the last hour and a half, and I recognize that I have learned much more than I expected to learn.

The reason why I'm talking to you is the following. Here in Washington, a group of our peers, annd all kinds of professionals, doctors, engineers —we have been working together in what we expect to be the

So there are a lot of contradictions in these international dimensions for each of our national origin groups. And what happens in the community, especially on things like this micro enterprise and so on. How much of that money is being sent back to countries — not just in support of the — but in support of relatives — we have a lot to offer.

first community — Hispanic Community Center in Washington, D.C.

This effort has been going on for the last —I would say the last three, three and a half years. And this is a grassroots effort. It was initiated by garage owners, by store keepers, by office workers. And the basic groundwork has been done, and we expect to have what will be the center of health care and education for the large mass of community that doesn't have really access to all these things.

Where you have existing institutions, both community based and business practicing, and the public sector, that are there, they should be tapped first, I think, in any economic development strategy. And you work them to the greatest extent possible.

We are also tutoring already kids in —schools here. This event in Washington, D.C. has already lowered dropout — high school dropout numbers in the country of Hispanics.

Now, this program, as I mentioned to you, was initiated about three years ago in grassroots — we the doctors, we just came within the last few months, just because the system has gone to our level. We do expect to have — education, and health care, but at the same time we speak — other facilities.

The — will be finished within the last three years, and our long-term goals are to network with —in the country. In Washington, D.C., you survive in this city, unquestionably the power center of the world, you learn to realize what works and what doesn't work. And if you don't know that, you might know somebody you could ask. And this — here in Washington, we have already a nucleus of Hispanics, most of us — with the federal government, in relatively high positions. We have learned how to produce — how to defend ourselves and accomplish something.

So the basic point is this, that we have already made a significant impact in health. We have been invited to be part of the White House programs on health care assessment.

But the community center is so vital, so extremely important. Hispanics can develop in this country community health centers that, for a limited amount of money, and practically no waste, are delivering health care at a very low, low cost.

Last week in Puerto Rico, I saw a community center that takes care of about 6,000 people, migrant workers primarily — migrants coming here to the U.S.

— and they have about 40 staff members, with a budget of $1 million. That means that these people are getting health care services for a full year for about $166. This is an unquestionably better. And this is a capital that we have in the country that we can offer.

I would like to suggest that we are volunteers. This is something in addition to our jobs. But we would like to offer to you any type of help, coordination, communication, any way that we could be of help or assistance to you, we would be glad to do so.

Mr. Gonzales: Thank you. Let's make sure people exchange cards as a result of our panel, and stick around afterwards to exchange them.

The Audience: Hello. My name is — I work with Congressman Ron Coleman here in Washington, and I want to commend the panelists for all their presentations. It was very good. I especially wanted to commend Mr. Ballesteros for his — for his efforts in Arizona. I plan to follow up and ask him about the micro type programs that we can do in our district.

I want to see if the panel can address my question, which goes to the lines of some of the Hispanic youths in America — leaving the communities. I know that when I graduated from high school, there was nothing for me to do — I'm from Laredo, Texas. It's a largely Hispanic community on the border, and there is no master's programs, or PhD programs, and I left for Austin to go to school. And as a result, I never came back. I did some jobs, and I'm up here in Washington now.

And what I want to see is how can we get the Latino — to stay in the community, to contribute to it, because I don't know if people realize this, but Latino youths are very affluent.

I'm sure people who — from San Antonio, for example, Ms. Ramirez, she can see that a lot of the Latino youths, they have VCRs, they have cars, they have cameras. They have everything. But they are still not satisfied. They complain and they say, "Well, we need some more," and so I want to see if there is some way that — you have some ideas to get the — you know, to get these Latino youths back into the community.

We keep hearing about the disintegration of the black community, when the doctors, or lawyers, who used to live in those communities, left and never came back. And so, you know, welfare mothers, and all these, you know, "things that happen."

So I want to take any suggestions from you.

Mr. Gonzales: The point is our communities are suffering from a brain drain. Ms. Ramirez.

Ms. Ramirez: I just remember one of our workers — involved in the organizations — we raise them and then we lose them. And that's exactly what's happening to a lot of our communities, and we understand that.

...our communities are suffering from a brain drain.

One of the reasons that I think we are losing many of our young peoples, number one, is because we cannot provide — providing affordable housing or something that they can be proud of, to stay in our communities.

Number two is, I think, also is that, you know, once we educate them, they go into a different world, and they see the good things, and so that's what they want.

So one of the things that we have done in San Antonio, number one, is to be able to provide them, you know, affordable housing where they can come back and be part of the unity in our community, some

type of goal. We didn't have streets, or drainage, or — and we had those old houses. Now our communities are slowly changing.

But one of the things that I think we're doing, is that we're providing our young people throughout our Project Quest an opportunity to get jobs in San Antonio. A lot of them were leaving because there were no, you know, good quality jobs, where they could support a family. And so once they get educated, I mean, a lot of our young people were going to college, getting educated, and there were no jobs, or at least they didn't know where to go look.

The way we did it with Project Quest was basically sit down with the business community, and the mayor of San Antonio, in the community and say, "Okay. Where are the jobs today?"

And so we were able — everybody said, "There is no jobs." They are jobs. There's a lot of jobs in the medical field. And at this point, we are — we have right now in the community 650 jobs, you know, for our youth, so that they can, you know, get the job training and get a job. Some of them already have college educations, but they were unable to get a job, because they were not getting the right training.

And so through this two-year project, we are doing that, number one.

So, you know, basically, that's the way we are doing it to keep our community — to keep our young people in our communities, by offering them what they need.

Mr. Ballesteros: After seven years of working with micro enterprise development, we find out that we are strengthening the family, that these businesses now becomes a family business. And so that, in itself, we're seeing that the younger generation are also helping, because it's a desire that they want to keep the family unit together.

In a lot of cases, welfare mothers are married and building that unity again. So micro enterprise — the fact that you are helping, motivating them, is also helping in keeping those kids in there, because not only do I find that kids that are coming back to work in that family enterprise, because it is strengthening and it's creating job opportunities for other people in that community.

Mr. Gonzales: Yes, sir.

Mr. Juarez: Nelson Juarez from — I want to also commend the panelists. I have learned a great deal in terms of information here as well. I'm very interested — presentation.

And I'd just like to make some comments. We also — representative. We — are concerned also, even though we are in favor of the health care reform proposals — but we are very concerned with a lot of the components of the other proposals.

I think there is a correlation between our economic health and the productivity of our communities, in relation to the health. So that we have to not lose sight of our access to health care. How can we get training into the work force. How do we get allocated resources within the work force?

The fact of the matter is that in the proposal, there is not any resources allocated to that. And if there is a reorganization of the community — a reorganization, I think we need also to have to redefine the community, because I don't buy the numbers that we, the Latino population — numbers.

If we take into consideration the last ten years of immigration in this country, Colombians, over one million people; Dominican Republic, that we don't define as one million — a tremendous amount of the immigration wave that comes to the United States of America that are not documented, and don't allow ourselves to be documented. The numbers that have been presented to us are not the numbers. And we will continue finding official numbers, and I think we better define our numbers, to be represented — in power.

I think there is a correlation between our economic health and the productivity of our communities, in relation to the health. So that we have to not lose sight of our access to health care.

Another question is that people discuss and make an issue of accountability. I think we have to make a fiscal accountability. The fact of the matter is that half the money being spent, where the moneys — we've been told there is not enough money to be allocated for our development, our housing, our access to health care.

The corporations — the international corporations in the Free Trade Agreement are the ones who are going to benefit, and they haven't benefited to the — transfer of wealth in the last ten years. They have benefited. They have not made the contribution to — policy, to the national wealth, or supply. We have given away $300 million to corporations to advertise in other countries, where they are profit-making operations.

Those are facts. The question is, we have to keep sight of the — where our money is being spent. We all pay taxes. This is our money. The question here is, are we entitled to receive equal access to the resources that we will contribute to the national health fund.

And I don't buy the ideas that the economic development is, to a smaller scale — the future of our communities.

I think we need to redefine our community and we need to have organizers in the labor movement, who must organize everybody who works for the same employer. We won't have to look at the community —organize everybody that lives in that community to empower ourselves to make the changes.

Dr. Donato: I think I agree with you that a lot of the change has to come from the communities themselves and that, indeed, my focus on employability issues, I think — the people who can identify the true problems are the people in their own communities.

I mean, if we think back to the prior question, how can we — you know, what can we offer our children so that they come back? How can we keep the people who lead?

The bottom line is, we have to be able to offer jobs, housing, quality housing; right; places where our children can grow up, places where our kids can go to

school. I agree it has to happen at the community level.

However, I would argue that looking at —doing the kinds of work that I do, which is at the national level, and then at local labor market levels, using again existing data, which you are right, usually underestimate the numbers of undocumented migrants in the United States, are there — my work is only an estimate of what's going on.

The bottom line is, we have to be able to offer jobs, housing, quality housing; right; places where our children can grow up, places where our kids can go to school. I agree it has to happen at the community level.

But, indeed, the numbers that we use, or at least the data sets that we try to use, we are quite sensitive to the fact that they are estimates. And as a result, we choose some data and not other data.

In addition, I've done extensive work on Mexican migration to the United States, in which I do have estimates of the flows, and the numbers, of illegals and/or undocumented entries to the United States.

And so, again, you're right — I didn't mention it, but you're smart to say that indeed we always have to take into account undocumented migrants, and especially when we're trying to summarize things at these broad levels, at these aggregate levels.

Mr. Gonzales: Yes, sir.

Mr. Linares: I am Councilman Guillermo Linares, from New York City. I come from Washington Heights, which is an area of the city that became national news in July of last year, when we had disturbances, right after the Los Angeles riots, and just before the national convention. Perhaps the fact that those two happening, helped introduce a Dominican-American — Washington Heights has the highest concentration of Dominican-Americans.

And I stand here as the first Dominican American elected to higher office in New York City.

I raise this because I'm here looking at how a new community, the wave of immigration is still very much coming through, as it is for immigrants from the rest of Latin America and other parts of the world. And the numbers will be dramatically different at the end of this century.

And as an incoming community, we were looking to place ourselves to deliver the fullest potential we have.

I am here asking you, what are those elements — what is the blueprint that a new incoming community, that brings all the ingredients, all the potential you can ask for, economically speaking, and in terms of the sense of pride that you need to really have a collective vision to — yourself, along with others. What is that blueprint?

How is it that a community like the one that I represent can look to build its agenda, giving the set of experiences other immigrant communities that have really come and gone through hell?

How is it that we can build a blueprint of empowerment, looking at the viability a community has to empower itself and to take hold, and face those challenges?

That's what I'm posing, and I hope that I hear some comments from you.

Mr. Gonzales: It would take our last — next to last questioner to bring us back to the original question that we began with. What are the elements that make communities viable?

Mr. Sagansky: I'll take just a quick short stab at an extremely important question.

What I can think of is the number of places around the world that are in the midst of a similar kind of experience, that have gone through major economic upheaval and change, in terms of demographic or political systems.

And there are various models that are proposed, but one that particularly rings true to me is the one where the representatives of that new country itself sit down to define the vision of what it is that they want to be, and from there develop a strategy of problem analysis, process building, and — being done, I should say, from what would be known as a systems perspective. Where is it you want to ultimately end up? Now let's take a step back, and another step back, and another step back, and come to each of the problems, or assemble each of the skills that we want to reach.

I think that it's important to start there and that's where I'll leave my comments.

Ms. Ramirez: I remember when the Levi Strauss plant closed in San Antonio, there was a tremendous feeling in our community that we have 1,000 people without work and, you know, so people that had to make payments, people that had to support families, there was a tremendous problem with spirit.

How is it that we can build a blueprint of empowerment, looking at the viability a community has to empower itself and to take hold, and face those challenges?

One of the things we did as an organization, is that we basically went out to the community and started doing house meetings. We had house meetings in people's homes and asked them, okay, part of your problem is, how can you solve this problem.

I think that people are very intelligent. And so first we had house meetings, and went to community meetings that we started to get — start strategizing and developing that kind of vision. And this is how we developed Project Quest.

It's not developed by the political forces in San Antonio. We, the community, developed the project. And I think that is important that we bring the community together and talk about how can we solve our problems together. And that is the first thing that is to be done.

Mr. Gonzales: Mr. Bonilla.

Dr. Bonilla: Yes. I live in Guillermo's neighborhood and I think he is being very modest here. I think the fact that the Dominican community has representation on the City Council, and that his leadership in

that community in mustering the resources, intellectual and political, and to the newness of this immigration, which I think represents a new reality in terms of immigration to the United States, in which the connections back are so strong, so real, that I think we need to understand. And this is one of the dimensions of the issues that I wanted to emphasize.

Is the reality of communities that have to anchor their social existence, and economic well-being in more than one nation at the same time, in more than one city, and Dominicans, I believe, seem to be managing this process with exceptional ability, political leadership.

The flow of remittances to the Dominican Republic is a major source of support. Perhaps the main source of capital for new investment, and for consumption, and maintenance of families there.

In a very short time, the community has established a Dominican Institute at the city university. They have research capabilities.

The neighborhood has its problems, but it's a vibrant one, that has thousands of businesses, and people say behind every apartment door there is an industry.

Micro enterprise.

Mr. Mercado: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen of the panel, and good afternoon to the audience.

My name is Jose Mercado. I'm the community coordinator for the Inner City Housing Authority. My territory is the Bronx. And I came here — this is my first time in Washington, and this is all new to me.

I'm very taken aback by the issues. I tackle a lot of issues in the Bronx, and I guess you can call me like a conflict resolution expert.

One thing that I just want to comment on is that I grew up in Brooklyn — and I had the opportunity to go to college. I went to school, and I graduated with honors, I'm proud to say. And one thing that my father always told me was to never forget where you came from. And the Housing Authority was able to provide an opportunity for me to go back in the community and work some — I guess some magic.

And I'm proud to say that I did some positive things. I was a former community center director and I was promoted to the Department of Community Affairs, and I became a community coordinator, dealing with ten associations in the borough of the Bronx, and I guess this will offer some reassurance that — you had made a comment, ma'am, Ms. Ramirez, that "Where are our young people going? We can't keep them in the community. They are off following the American dream." And I just want to comment that this is one individual that has not forgotten.

And this has been a serious experience for me. And coming to Washington for the first time has been a serious experience. And I come here thirsty for knowledge because the programs and initiatives that the authority is putting in place, that puts me out as their — field soldier, to address is very sensitive.

So I was fortunate to receive an invitation out of Congressman Serrano's office, and on short notice, I came down here, and I got here last night at four in the morning, and I've been — kind of slept through the morning, so I missed the morning session, but this was one session that I was really interested in attending because of the relation — the similarities of what I do. And anything that you can offer that I can take back, I would welcome that. So, thank you.

Mr. Gonzales: We have one more person. Just to let the people know what we are planning to do is, after we give everyone a chance to speak who wants to, I'll ask each of the panelists to give us a one to two minute summary, and we'll wrap it up. Okay. Yes, sir?

Mr. Reyes: Luis Reyes, a member of the Board of Education of New York. He is not only modest, but he is ambitious. And it is my expectation and hope that he sits someday here as a congressman from Washington, D.C., since he is, in effect, the mayor of Washington, D.C. — excuse me, Washington Heights.

...the representatives of that new country itself sit down to define the vision of what it is that they want to be, and from there develop a strategy of problem analysis, process building,

However, just to be grounded in reality, Guillermo and I were both in the same auditorium a few months ago of young people, 300 or more from Alianza de Americana, having their youth conference. And the question was asked again, and again, and again, all afternoon, by young people of the elected and appointed officials from the city, "Why do we have to riot or have disturbances to get the attention of government, in order to get summer jobs?" The reality is that there are hundreds, if not thousands — hundreds of thousands — of Latino males and females, young people, who do not seek jobs. And I don't mean a micro cottage industry job. But I'm talking about a legitimate job, and so they don't see the connection between staying in the community, staying in school, and economic viability.

I would suggest to the young man who just preceded me, and to you, that part of the economic viability is providing, through the schools, and through the community organizations, opportunities for young people to make a difference in their community, to change the conditions along with the adults in their community, to practice economic viability. Whether it's — in New York City, like San Antonio, we have the benefit of the Brooklyn Clergy Coalition, as well as in the South Bronx, in creating new schools, schools that are committed to the community, and that are also trying to educate young people in solving problems in the community. We're trying to create a — El Fuente Academy for Peace and Justice in Williamsburg, the Latino Leadership School, taking the model of —leadership development and community service, and the Harlem — the Urban Peace Academy, and many others, where communities are at the bottom of the creation of a new alternative school. And it is connected to making changes in the — in the community, and in the school, and not separate, so

...the reality of communities that have to anchor their social existence, and economic well-being in more than one nation at the same time, in more than one city, and Dominicans, I believe, seem to be managing this process with exceptional ability, political leadership.

that students don't think they can get an education and then, if not, drop out of the community — out of the community to somewhere else.

But that means that economic viability is somehow connected to a vision about — that young people have about being part of the community. Community — it's not just an economic issue. It's, if you will, a spiritual community issue of identity and that somewhere along the line, you don't have to wait until you are a graduate at Harvard or at Stanford to get a sense of belonging to a community, that you are trying to recapture, and then have an opportunity in Washington, D.C. to intern.

We need interns, apprentices in our hospitals, in our schools, in our community agencies, locally. So I think one of the ways of developing economic viability in dealing with the issues of leadership development is to provide internships, apprenticeships locally.

And I'm not talking, necessarily, about the Amoco, or the bank mentorship, which is usually a limited one-on-one kind of thing. But I'm talking about opportunities for young people to connect their education with a community service internship around community projects. And that way the best and the brightest don't have to come to the Hill, but stay in the barrio, where there are opportunities to use their God-given talents and intelligence to help make the local community viable.

Mr. Gonzales: Thank you.

Mr. Moreno: Just on that point, I wanted to add that we used an intern from Harvard this year, and — a young man from Houston. He worked on a proposal. We just got awarded 67,000 because of the work of this intern.

Mr. Gonzales: And you are, sir?

Mr. Moreno: — Moreno, Houston.

Mr. Gonzales: Just in terms of wrapping up, I think what I will do is just go back in the reverse order that we began and ask each of our panelists for some statement. So, Gary.

Mr. Sagansky: This whole question of viability is so important and critical. I think the last comment that was made, I'd just — I think it's an excellent point.

There are models for development out there. As a matter of fact, in that last kind of global question about Washington Heights, my sense of approaches, where they are trying to recreate the economic fabric, when you hear the actual activities or experiments that go on, you so rarely find those that actually work. It's hard to get to good examples that have made a difference.

One place where there are some, though, and re-emphasizing the point of the last comment, is in the area of youth apprenticeships, in looking at Germany, where you have a modestly expanding economy, but the rate of youth unemployment is identical to the rate of adult unemployment in that society, and it is — it's roughly seven or eight percent at the given time, as opposed to in the United States where it might be 30 or 40 percent.

Real youth apprenticeships do work in tying people into their community and giving them a part of their social identity and their economic identity in their society.

So I feel that youth apprenticeships are important to build. You can't adopt the exact same model as they have in Germany, because there doesn't seem to be the political will to make it happen that way. But there has to be something there that is distinctly our own that can be created. Thanks.

Ms. Ramirez: I guess one of the most important things that I would like to leave you with today is that only through creating opportunities for our families and our communities, I think that's going to be very important.

But it is also very important for the community to develop their own strategies, to develop their own vision about how — how they would like to see their communities.

I just wanted to go back a little bit to this young man and I want to congratulate him for staying in his community. But one of the problems we have in San Antonio is our people — our kids have no opportunities to stay in our community. Now we have created them, and I think that's going to be very important.

But we must not only look at housing, and jobs. We also have to look at education. We have to look at how can we keep our children safe. We have to develop in our communities a whole strategy, a whole strategy, to be able to alleviate poverty in our communities, and then by giving our kids a better education, by having after school programs, where they can be safe, by being able to have more job training programs that are actually going to benefit the person, not the business, but the person.

...one of the ways of developing economic viability in dealing with the issues of leadership development is to provide internships, apprenticeships locally.

What we are talking about is how can we develop human capital, so they can take care of their own families.

And so, you know, one of the most important things, I think, is that we need to be able — our communities need to be able, number one, to organize. Number two, to be able to develop strategies. And number three, to create their own vision, so they can have a better life, a better quality of life for our families.

Dr. Donato: My — I had several points that I made earlier, but my general point about the — sort of the overall national problem that we need to keep

in mind is that there is greater uncertainty for Latinos in U.S. employment generally, and that in particular the labor market, there is increasing ethnic inequality across these groups.

And how to get around, or how to solve this problem, it is a very complicated problem, as we have all heard today. The problem has to begin — the solution has to begin at the community level. I agree. We have to have our identity there. We then have to work out from there.

Education is, of course, a key. Job training, and lots of other employment related resources and supports are necessary to make — to lessen the inequality.

But my — in order to do this, we have to have the political will. And I am convinced that while, in theory, employment, or the viabilities of our communities, is something that almost all of us, if we were surveyed nationally, would agree that we should have, that this is a bipartisan issue, in theory, that in practice, it is not.

And until we can overcome that reality, that practice, and truly believe that politically we can make this happen, we're — you know, we're going to be faced with some rather enormous community problems.

Ms. Ayala: Mr. — statement — posed the question, why do our communities have to riot, have to rebel, before attention is given to their needs.

I would say that — I'm not only talking about here today — being reduced to — at the edges of the system, with the edges of the system, rather than dealing with the essential causes for the problems we are facing in our community.

And I would say that perhaps to really deal with the issues that we are facing in our neighborhoods, because I do define them as communities under a state of siege, for us to really deal with that, our elected officials and our community leaders have to have the courage to jump in the — head on and try to really define the parameters of how the discussion is taking place around, and what the problems are, where the resources should be put, and whether our community's needs are on the agenda, because even that is questionable many times.

That is one favorite excuse right now, is there is no resources to deal with employment needs, and with affirmative action issues, because budgets are being cut.

There is no new money for programs because budgets are being cut.

There is nothing, no money, to pay for the public school systems because there is no money for that.

And one major thing that we — have to do is to fight those conceptions because they are based on false assumptions, and that is that you cannot change things as they — you cannot change the way of doing things.

For instance, in the last budget debate in the Senate, the Pentagon came in and asked for a certain amount of money. I don't remember exactly what. And the Senate committee gave them more money than they asked for. And my question is, we say we don't have money to educate our children, and we are giving the military more money than they are asking for. Where are we to respond to that?

Federal programs, like CBBG, that go directly to the cities for community services, about 70 to 80 percent of that money remains in the budget for city administration to run things as usual, when the proportion of that money should actually be put out in the neighborhoods to do the kind of things we are talking about.

In the last — how many years — five years or so, the whole tax system has been redefined in a way that the redistribution of income in the country has happened from the bottom up. We are giving the ones who have more, more money, and taking it from the ones at the bottom. We have to retrace that, because that's taking money out of the pockets of people in our neighborhoods who are raising big families, to give it to the rich.

So that means that our leadership has to take — within the democracy party, and redefining these problems and redefining where the priorities are and where the money should be spent.

Dr. Bonilla; There seems to be a consensus here that the most crucial problem is jobs. We simply are not using our human resources in any sensible kind of way.

The other point of consensus seems to be that of the question of political will. And I think that's also been very clearly documented that the crisis and the impact on our workers, especially, has been a very deliberate withdrawal of federal responsibility and fiscal responsibility for the situation of the cities, and for the employment situation.

No one has mentioned the idea of full employment. This country has a tradition, and a body of legislation, that mandates and commits the federal government to a concern for stepping in and creating conditions for full employment. That legislation has been lying fallow in the Congress for the last 20 years. That part of it that's on the books has not been implemented.

Yet there is abundant recent research of the same kind that's embraced and being used to promote NAFTA, that demonstrates that it is economically feasible and advantageous, and that we would save enormous amounts of money, by putting into practice the basic economic right to a job that pays a decent wage for every American.

And that's not a pipe dream, and I — it may seem a fantasy to talk about it at this point, but there are organizations out there. There is new research that has to be done. The evidence is in place. And that should be a rallying cry that the present government will eventually have to listen to to get over these health — barriers that it has to face at this point.

The 103rd Congress, which is currently in session, includes a record number of women. In 1992, six women were elected to the Senate. The number of women tripled in the Senate, from two to six. And, in the U.S. House of Representatives, it nearly doubled.

Mr. Ballesteros: I began and end with the concept for a new paradigm, a vision, that poverty is linked to disinvestment, and deindustrialization occurring in our communities.

But we must not only look at housing, and jobs. We also have to look at education. We have to look at how can we keep our children safe. We have to develop in our communities a whole strategy, a whole strategy, to be able to alleviate poverty in our communities,

Therefore, community development depends upon a willingness to use every resource at our disposal to reclaim and develop community productive space. First we must retain what exists. Let's take good care of what we already have, to preserve those assets, as the foundation of the future of our cities, and of our most important asset, our people.

Who are the owners of the companies that inhabit our communities, and what values and priorities guide their business plan?

Are the critical detriments in how production is organized, the linkage between the company and other companies, and the community?

Matter of employment and training, the level of commitment to affirmative action, and environmental standards. We must be prepared to purchase and develop local industries as an — of community development. In this way we can most directly promote development with new standards and objectives consistent with the community needs.

In order for this to happen, there must be a basis for community support. This support is possible when our vision of development recognizes and celebrates the dynamic and positive role of labor and doesn't fear labor costs, or doesn't fear democratic and participatory forms of management, and development, knowing that such involvement contributes directly to the cultural development and education of our people, and to the training of our new leaders.

It is also premised on and committed to the eradication of poverty and discrimination, and stands for ecologically sustainable development.

To accomplish these objectives, persons and resources — in the traditional development community must be organized, must be vocalized. Organized labor, and unorganized labor in the major component is a productive capacity. Organized labor is an essential part of economic and social change.

Labor must be challenged to organize unorganized elements in poor and distressed communities, much more manageably than it has ever been done. And it must be organized around community development, as well as labor issues. Rebuilding and expanding the community coalition is fundamental to the success of this vision.

Of equal importance to this vision is the support that mobilization of the local private sector, the local businesses that have an interest in local development, and a stable development company. These are the companies whose current location is very important to their business.

New corporate voices, supported by organized development community need to emerge to challenge the perception that the entire business community is of like mind, and to frame the issues as good business practices. That is community viability.

Mr. Gonzales: Sir, were you raising your hand or just stretching?

The Audience: I was just stretching.

Mr. Gonzales: Stretching. Okay. To me falls the responsibility of trying to follow up on people, and I'm not sure I can do that.

I'd like to close by making a couple of comments. It is very obvious that we've only begun to peel away the outer layers of the onion that we have selected here to discuss, community viability.

This is a forum — a topic of discussion that could go on for several hours at the minimum.

When people were standing here, I began having my own visions. I began imagining this forum being linked up with audiences in places like New York, and San Antonio, and L.A., and Chicago, Miami. What we'd have is these kinds of discussions linked up by a satellite with sound and video, so that people could talk to each other and discuss and share the models that are obviously out there, because we came here instructed not to spend as much time on talking about the problems, because we understand what the problems are, but to begin to share information about what —what the solutions are.

It is obvious that our community has the capacity to identify our problems and to develop the strategies that we need, and to implement a program to address the problems.

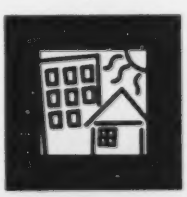
Real youth apprenticeships do work in tying people into their community and giving them a part of their social identity and their economic identity in their society.

The question that I am left with, however, is how this is accomplished in what we have come to call — using the cliche, the changing global economic climate, in the face of the — the push towards free trade, of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

I happen to be one of the people who thinks that economic integration is probably, with or without NAFTA, is inevitable.

At the same time I ask myself, are we, as a community, inheriting a country that is slowly being decapitalized. And if that is the case, what is the remedy.

In the course of talking about deindustrialization, or mentioning deindustrialization, Mr. Ballesteros made the comment that — he said that using every



resource at our disposal. And my mind clicked because it reminded me of something else someone once said, "by any means possible."

My final thought is that it is very important for you to realize that the leadership that Chairman Serrano was talking about today, at the end of the luncheon, for those of you who were here, and in my experience in working on Capitol Hill and talking to lawmakers about different issues, is that the bottom line is always, "Let me see how this plays in the district."

Another way of saying this is that all politics is local. The decisions that are made here are made from people looking over their backs, behind their shoulders, to what — what's happening in the district. And it is very important for you to remember that.

I will close on that note. And invite you to please stay in touch. Okay. Thank you.

Session #6
Women and Public Policy

Moderator:
Patricia Guadalupe
Hispanic Link News Service

Panel Members:

Gloria Maria Santiago
Associate Professor,
Graduate School of Social Work, Rutgers University

Christine Marie Sierra
Associate Professor
of Political Science, University of New Mexico

Ms. Guadalupe: Hi. Good afternoon. Welcome. Thanks for coming. My name is Patricia Guadalupe. I'm with Hispanic Link News Service. And our panel today is Women and Public Policy.

I'd like to introduce our panelists. Dr. Gloria Maria Santiago is associate professor of the Graduate School of Social Work at Rutgers University and chairperson of the Hispanic Women's Task Force in New Jersey. She's been instrumental in passing legislation for Hispanic women in New Jersey.

Among her current projects is the successful passage of the Hispanic Women Resource Center Act, the first landmark legislation in the entire nation that appropriates funding for Hispanic women centers.

Her current book is Breaking Ground and Barriers, Hispanic Women Developing Effective Leadership. There are some copies on the table over there. One of the points about the book is that she conducted a lot of interviews. So there's a lot of oral history and are not just facts and figures.

To my immediate left is Dr. Christine Marie Sierra, associate professor of Political Science at the University of New Mexico, Ph.D. from Stanford University. And her expertise is U.S./Latina politics, race relations, and women in American politics.

Her publications include Studies of Latina Electoral Behavior, Latina Women in Politics, and she is co-editor of Chicana Voices, Intercessions of Class, Race and Gender.

What we're going to be discussing today is the impact of Latina women in public policy. The 103rd Congress, which is currently in session, includes a record number of women. In 1992, six women were elected to the Senate. The number of women tripled in the Senate, from two to six. And, in the U.S. House of Representatives, it nearly doubled.

In fact, one of the other panelists —unfortunately, she couldn't be here as a representative — Nydia Velazquez, who is the first Puerto Rican woman in Congress. So, because of her extensive, very busy schedule, she is not here. But Congressman Jose Serrano will be joining us in a little while.

I wanted to start out the panel by discussing and, at some point, I would like the people in the audience to move a little bit forward, closer to us, and then I'm going to be going around the room kind of like Phil Donahue and asking everybody questions.

Now, because of the number of women in — especially Latina women in Congress, is that going to have an impact in the way that some of the laws are passed and created? And I wanted to first turn that question to Dr. Maria Santiago.

Do you think that the fact that there are more women, especially Hispanic women, is that going to affect the way that policy is made here in Washington?

Dr. Santiago: First, I want to thank you for inviting me. I think that this is, number one, a very great opportunity for us to be talking about women and public policy, given the importance of what's happening in the country and what's happening in this administration. So I say we have four years to really begin to make an impact.

Certainly, it does make a difference, and it makes a difference because public policy is driven by values, and values are very important to the way that we define public policy.

And so the question is one that, when I got the question, I looked at it from three points of view. One was, if I had the opportunity to develop a model on public policy in terms of how Latinas have emerged in public policy, I would have to say that it has to be a model that is very grassroots, community-based oriented. That's where Hispanic women have gotten most of the energy and the sense of direction about what it is that we want to do as Latinas in this country.

My experience and work in public policy as a Latina who is in academia but one that is also an apprised scholar — what I mean by that is that I'm consistently

walking in and out of academia and then going into the legislature to testify and, also, provide directions for policy. My experience in there has taught me tremendously that values — that the public policy arena is influenced by the values of those people that are there.

...if I had the opportunity to develop a model on public policy in terms of how Latinas have emerged in public policy, I would have to say that it has to be a model that is very grassroots, community-based oriented.

Women have come in as advocates of public policy, and that's — you know, I tackled the question from that point of view, because I think that we still need to learn a lot about those that have been elected. We need to learn what is it about them that is different, and that's another question you asked me. I don't know if you want me to answer right now, but I'll leave the differences for later.

But what I'm finding is that it makes a big difference for the Latina community to have, number one, the presence there; and, number two, that when we come there, we do come with a community agenda and we come with a lot of community support. Then when we get there, we're very much isolated and very much in the periphery, and a lot has to do because we don't understand how policy works, we don't understand the structures of government well, we don't understand the politics of what it is to create policy. The presence of Latinas, in essence, is one that has been from the periphery. We come in there many times with, again, those community agendas, very energized, very targeted in terms of what we want to do; and so we bring a sense of what I call an emergence of history of problems to the legislature.

And it hasn't just been by public policy appointees or by electorate winning candidacies.

And so it is an incredible shock for a lot of us when we come in and then we have to tackle our communities' agendas. Many times what happens is we get beaten up by those public policy people who have been there for many, many years.

I had a very good experience in New Jersey, trying to pass a bill in the legislature as someone who was not an elected official, but someone who was an advocate, an advocate of women's programs, and someone who had a great idea. How I did that was basically by bringing the idea to a couple of legislators and policy-maker people who really believed in the idea.

And the idea had to do with what we call welfare reformance, you know, welfare reformance, one of the major initiatives in this administration, and that was four years ago. I was a visionary four years ago. I saw the importance of creating programs for welfare mothers in my state, and so I brought it to a white male, who happened to be an ally, a Republican, an ally Republican. I was a Democrat. I wasn't even a Democrat; I was an independent voter at that point, but I always allied with the Democratic Party. So I was smart enough to make it a bipartisan initiative.

What I learned from that experience I documented that in an article I published in a social work journal in 1989, June 1989. I sort of documented this whole experience, and the experience, if you'll allow me for a minute to tell you, was one that for me was very empowering. I was able to — in a year, and, you know, to pass public policy in our states takes about 10 years. Not everyone is successful. It took me a year to get practically a bill through from the outside, because I was not really the sponsor. I was the advocate of the bill.

And it was a bill to basically create centers for Latina women who were in poverty. How I did it was through the creation of a network and support organization, but I was the front person in front of the legislation. I was able to document it, do the research, provide it to the legislators, create a forum where I share the data and the information, and then ask for a sponsor. I was able to get, like I said, a Republican sponsor as well as a Democrat sponsor, a woman from Newark, New Jersey, a black woman, Juanita Ledman, who is in the Senate, the first black woman, who believed in me and, also, coached me throughout the process.

What I learned right away was that basically, you know, the machismo, the chauvinist ways in the legislature is very well alive today. I was invited to join the committee right away, and I was invited to present the data, and I was asked out. I was officially asked out for a date by the chairman of the committee, who said, "Dr. Santiago, would you like to join me for lunch? We can talk about this idea. It sounds very good. And we can talk about us." And so, you know, the chairman of the House looked at me and said, "Dr. Santiago, don't go."

And so, you know, I'm very smart. I knew by then that that was going to happen. I anticipated that, but I knew that it was my only chance to go and get the endorsement for this piece of legislation, and so I accepted. I accepted and then the women looked at me like "You're dead," you know, "This is the end of your academic career because you will be in the headlines. You're dating a Republican," and so forth.

Well, you know, I went back home and I called all my best friends, people who I knew who really were leaders in the community, and I asked them to find me the best 10 welfare mothers in the area that could really advocate for welfare reform and for Hispanic issues in our state, and then I said, "Also, I want 10 that can eat the most and can really join me in a lunch with the senator," and so, you know, "Refer me 10 great welfare mothers that could really tell the story," and I invited them to lunch. Of course, I didn't say anything to our senator. When I arrived — I asked the women to dress up and to look the best possible; and, as you know, the working communities have wealthier mothers, tend to always overdress and overdo it. And so, when they got there, you know, they were expected to tell the story, to talk about what it was about them.

I used that opportunity to really get the senator —

to give him, number one, a lesson and, number two, to really educate him about who we were as Latina women.

Well, the first experience was, as I walked into the room, he had set up a very nice table with wine, and he was expecting me by myself, and I said, "Look, I have 10 constituents of welfare reform here, and we'll tell the story. And where are we sitting?" And he said, "Dr. Santiago, I didn't invite — I invited you. I didn't invite your community." And so I said, "Well, you forgot one thing. When you invite me, you invite the community, and that's who I represent here. So who better than the community can tell the story."

And that's how the whole thing began, and so by three o'clock we had convinced him. As you know, they ordered the best food and they ate all the food, and they really got to engage in the process; and, at three o'clock, I got him to say yes. He endorsed — he says, "I will take the bill. I need an endorser on the Democrats." And I already had somebody, and so the story began.

And so it was a very tedious process, but I'm trying to say that the first step for me was knowing that there was a history in our community of issues, and defining what I call a social problem very clearly in writing; and that was for me the first step to how Latinas begin to make impact, using the knowledge, making a difference to who we were, because we don't have access to the legislature. Very seldom do we know the process. I knew it theoretically. I just never know what it is to walk it through. And, you know, learning about what it was to draft a piece of legislation, learning the language, learning the politics of the process, and then also getting community support throughout that process was, in essence, an incredible experience for me.

And the second thing I did was I able to legitimize an action plan by using the media. How I legitimized the need for Latina women to get services was by using television, using what I call the public forum for testimony, using the television whenever I got a chance to do it, and then bringing the women also to tell the story. So the second step was legitimizing the importance of what it was about this problem, that it was important to the community.

And then the third step was formulating a policy, getting all that experience to say, "Look, now that we're legitimizing it, everybody knows that it's an important issue." I had black women, white women, Asian women, Latino men in the community-based organization saying this is an important issue. All the — multi-position came from Latino men and the agencies because many of them felt that, you know, "Why should we provide services for Latina women when we provide multi-service to the community?"

And so it took a while for us to explain the importance of why it was that we wanted to do with services for Latina women. So, in essence, telling the story of that experience for me was very powerful, because I really got to know the dynamics of what it was to put a bill through; and, in formulation of a policy, one needs to learn about the committees and how to do the work and going in and outside of those committees, learning that it's all about who you know and how well you know people and how you treat people throughout that process, whether they're Republicans or Democrats, anticipating for problems, getting in there into a committee to testify, and knowing that there will be opposition and taking on the opposition whenever I could, or making up the stories instantaneously. And having people to testify, to me, was an incredible experience in itself.

And then finally came the passage of this bill into what we call the administration of policy, which was to get the governor, who was Republican by the way at that time, in my state to pass this bill, and getting the women that were inside, that were white and black, to support me and to write letters and to open access for me. And we don't have, by the way, no Hispanic women in the state legislature in my state, in New Jersey. I hope to change that this year.

So the good news is that the bill did get passed. We were able to get $750,000 allocated for three centers for welfare mothers in my state; and, of course, little did I know that we were creating landmark legislation. I didn't even know it was landmark legislation at the time.

I knew the importance of what we were doing, because everyone from all over the country were calling about "Can we get a copy of it?" So the bill is in law, is in the books of New Jersey, and it got replicated in California, Puerto Rico, and so right now is in place. And so what I'm doing right now is evaluating the process of that.

...that was for me the first step to how Latinas begin to make impact, using the knowledge, making a difference to who we were, because we don't have access to the legislature. Very seldom do we know the process.

So that's one experience that I can share with you about what women in public policy can do. You don't have to be an elected official to bring policy and to have impact on policy, although the way that policy is made is by women — by politicians, and that, is, you know, politicians who have positions of power and access, and that's one process.

The other one is through advocacy, and the third one is through the courts or through regulation that policy is created. So I don't know if I answered the question, but —

The Audience: I want to know who paid for the lunch. He paid?

Dr. Santiago: Oh, he did, he did. He did pay for the lunch, and he still reminds me. As a matter of fact, that man today is the president of the Senate in my state, very powerful and a dear, old friend, Republican, but a good, old friend.

Ms. Guadalupe: Thank you, Doctor. That happens here quite a bit, too, surprisingly enough.

I wanted to turn to Dr. Sierra and ask her the same question, but slightly different in the values as Hispanic women. When you bring, say, the same set of values but as a Republican woman, what is the difference in the values as compared to a Democratic

woman? Do you see any of those things, and do you see that, now that there are a variety of Latinas in Congress, that are coming into play?

Dr. Sierra: Well, let me answer your question with addressing the first part of it as well. It seems to me, in answering the question of do Latina women as elected officials and as policy makers have an impact, the answer, I can pretty comfortably say and agree with Gloria, is that, yes, it will and it does make a difference; but the more complex questions are how, in what ways, under what conditions.

And, with regard to that, I think it's important to keep in mind multiple dimensions to a Latina policy maker's experience and vantage point. First and foremost, if we're talking just about elected officials right now, and I'd like to address both elected officials and non-elected officials, but, nevertheless, women as political activists, if we're looking at Latinas as elected officials, they're, first and foremost, elected officials; and so they will have the same pressures, the same concerns, the same compelling interest to learn the legislative process and to behave like legislators. In a sense, they will be constrained by the rules of the game. They will also come to the table with their own predisposed ideology.

...if we're looking at Latinas as elected officials, they're, first and foremost, elected officials; and so they will have the same pressures, the same concerns, the same compelling interest to learn the legislative process and to behave like legislators. In a sense, they will be constrained by the rules of the game.

So, absolutely, partisanship, partisan difference will play a role on whether Latinas as legislators can, for example, coalesce across party identification, partisanship.

At the same time that women have to look at them and assess how Latinas behave as legislative officials, we have to understand that they're operating within certain defined rules of the game. At the same time, they are also women; and so another dimension, a multiple dimension of their reality as decision makers is the fact that, as Dr. Santiago says, they will, we think, bring to bear certain kinds of things that women seem to be doing, that we know that women seem to be doing when they are going through a decision-making process, when they are in policy-making decisions.

For example, it has been suggested that there are gender differences in how women define politics and, indeed, how women — the kinds of things that motivate women, for example, to attain elective office.

There has been one suggestion among studies, among scholars, for example, men are much more attuned to running for office for the sake of getting elected, for the sake of achieving a career in politics, for the sake of career enhancement. Men are also much more likely to run for higher office with the idea that their own personal interests would be advanced.

It has been suggested that women, however, while not to negate the fact that women are also as ambitious or can be as ambitious in terms of getting elected, but they might have a different sensibility, a different kind of commitment or reference point with the regard to why they run for office. They, it has been suggested, run for office, perhaps, because they want to do something in service to their community, something that dovetails with your argument that community-based politics is very important, a very intrinsic part of women's experiences.

Also, we've looked at — there is some research that looks at women in terms of their decision-making process, and is suggesting that there are gender differences in how men go about gaining information, studying a problem, and then resolving that problem, as opposed to how women go about doing these kinds of things.

So we should spend some more time talking and maybe trying to tease out and maybe for those of you who are in the audience who have some direct experiences with these kinds of questions, we certainly should tease out, perhaps, the extent to which there are gender differences and a variety of ways in looking at women as legislators.

The third dimension to women as policy makers that we have to also keep in mind is that Latina women are also Latinas, and so there will be situations where they will act as representatives certainly and as representatives, perhaps, on women's issues; but there will also be times where they simultaneously or, perhaps, in cases of emphasis, mostly act as women of color or representing their distinct ethnic communities of interest.

For example, I would be interested to see how Latina legislators, and maybe some of you can respond to this — I think I know some of the answers, but how are Latina legislators, for example, right now responding to the anti-immigrant climate that is upon us. And I point to California; the two women senators, Diane Feinstein and Barbara Boxer, are currently joining the bandwagon of bashing immigrants for all of the state's social and economic ills.

I would suspect that Latina legislators would be, I would hope, should be uncomfortable and certainly opposed to that kind of politics. They would part ways then with other women legislators because of their particular views and interests and experiences as Latinas.

So I think we have to keep in mind the multiple dimensions that simultaneously affect the decision-making processes in which Latina legislators are involved.

One other thing that I'd like to mention then and underscore is that, with regard to definitions of politics, the first question deals with, in particular, women as elected officials, but I also want to underscore the fact that we really don't know a whole lot about Latina women as elected officials.

As a matter of fact, I'd like to recognize someone in the audience right now who is addressing that very question as a scholar and is involved in a very serious research project: Paula Cruz Takush, who is over there, sitting over there, is actually investigating and writing a book that will be one of the first empirical studies of looking at Latinas in kind of their decision-making processes and looking at do they make a difference.

But we really don't know a whole lot in terms of scholarship and what studies tell us about the real impact, partially because, number one, a lot of people haven't been interested, and it takes people who are interested, and I might add it takes Latina scholars and Latina activists and Latina practitioners to kind of sort of bring this subject to the forefront.

We've only recently gotten — have attained the numbers by which we can move beyond just a few individuals and their life stories and really start to test are there patterns of behavior that are starting to make a difference. You know, we can always come up with individual stories, but it's most important to see now that we have numbers. Do the numbers make a difference? Are there patterns?

At the same time, though, let me add that we also know, even though we're just learning about Latinas as elected officials, we also are starting to recognize the profound meanings of politics outside of elected office; and, again, I would point to some research done by sociologists and anthropologists, in particular, which look at the grassroots community women. And what they are finding are that women perceive politics differently than men, and they act on politics differently than men, than even Latino men.

So, for example, when women seem to be much more interested and connected to interpersonal relations, to community networks, they use as a resource, as a political resource, their role and their position in those informal networks of neighborhoods and community settings. And their interest is really in terms of issues, issues that are oriented to community needs.

They are issues, by the way — we have a big debate, I think, in political science whether women as Latina activists are feminists or not. Let me point to the fact that we have many women, many Latina activists who I consider feminists, but white women scholars don't necessarily consider them feminists because they focus on issues not only that are gender-specific, in other words, not only are they so-called women's issues, but they simultaneously focus on issues that are of concern to men, women and children.

So there is an important kind of distinction in terms of looking at how women activists view politics. The men, it appears, really talk about politics in terms of office, in terms of who is seated in particular positions of power, that is, formal positions of power, and that makes a difference when you start to think about how people become and act in these kinds of political dimensions.

So, all of this to say that we certainly have — I think with every question that we raise, we can think of a need to address at least two, if not more, multiple other questions.

Ms. Guadalupe: Is there a state legislator here, anybody involved in state politics, at a local level? Anybody here?

Okay. I wanted to follow up on what Dr. Sierra was talking about. One of the things that is very distinctive about Hispanic, Latina women in politics is that there are more in the community level, grassroots level, than in Congress and in higher levels.

What do you think is the reason behind that? Is it lack of money or lack of desire to get any higher? And could you please give your name and where you're from.

The Audience: My name is Lucia Maria Garcia (phonetic), and I'm the director of State and Legislative Affairs for CABE, which is the California Association for Bilingual Education.

It is a unique position, because it's an elected position and it's statewide, and we address the issues that are — in terms of bilingual education, but I do also find that grassroots — you know, one of the things that I do as an advocate for bilingual education is to actually wake up our people, which the majority of are teachers, and they're very reluctant to even go to grassroots training. I have traveled throughout the state to get them motivated, so that if I could do it, they could do it; if I can go and testify, they can also do it as well.

And most of us feel that to be involved in politics, I'm finding, is not correct.

Ms. Guadalupe: Why do they think that?

The Audience: Because it's not our role, because it's dirty, because it may mean a lot of negative things; and, when you find that, you know, in order to face politics, like what you are saying, Dr. Santiago, is that you have to take that opposition. You know that you're going to stand in front of that— when you're giving your testimony.

I have had the experience, I don't know if you're read, with the Little Hoover (phonetic) Commission doing an investigation on bilingual education; and, not having that proactive kind of a sense and, also, being much more — our posture, I think, is more passive, if you will. When I found out that they were doing this investigation, I immediately called and said that I wanted to be on the agenda. The executive director for the Little Hoover Commission basically said to me, "The agenda is set." And it was set. It was only-in-English, only movement kind of an agenda.

Now, if I would have been a different kind of person, I would have said okay, you know, you give up, but that's not the case for me. So what I had to do was set out, use the press and have a press conference and actually expose them for what they were doing. So I was proactive. I went and testified. I had these people — this woman had said to me, "Listen, young lady, what you're doing is encouraging people, immigrants, to come to this country, and why aren't" —you know, this kind of a thing. And you have to control yourself, and I think in many respects it's because we haven't had enough role models as well. You know, I think Hillary Clinton is really teaching us a big lesson right now, you know, whereas we need

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to be cool, we need to be calm, but we also have to keep our ideals in focus.

To answer your question, I think it's just that. Just like we have lack of enough teachers where our students can see that we're Hispanics and we can become teachers as well, just the same way we don't have enough mentors that we can, "We look up to you."

...I would point to some research done by sociologists and anthropologists, in particular, which look at the grassroots community women. And what they are finding are that women perceive politics differently than men, and they act on politics differently than men, than even Latino men.

How many female senators, Hispanics, do we have throughout the United States? We may have them on the boards and, you know, for the school district board. We may have them as city council women. I'm coming from San Jose where we have two elected official females in the city council. We have a third one that it's a male who is Japanese, Mexican as well, and we don't do enough of the mentoring, number one.

The second part of it all is that, once we get them elected, what do we do to support them? Because I know that in my case, being the director of Legislative Affairs for CABE, one thing was to be elected; the other part was who's calling me and saying, "Don't worry if they yell at you, if they do this. You're doing the right thing." We don't have that support network.

Ms. Guadalupe: You wanted to expand on that?

Dr. Santiago: I want not only also to expand but answer the question as to why is it that we don't have enough Latinas in Congress. We don't have enough Latinas in Congress because we really haven't been able to invest in the kinds of training in terms of the campaigns and the political action committees that we need to invest.

And the other thing is because we invested a lot of time and support in getting Latina women elected at the local levels, and I think that that's very important. I think that we need to encourage that, to continue the support.

But I think you address a very important issue and, that is, that experience and, of course, the literature that is coming out right now is important in all this. The few little what I call books, few books, that are coming out are supporting a lot of the things.

Now, I do have my book here. One of the things that I did was interview — at least out of the 100 I interviewed, about 10 or 20 of them are Latina women who are in political positions; and let me tell you what they repeated to me consistently, was that they said the Latina women in political office, they tend to have a lot of enthusiasm, they're very effective and very dedicated on the local levels.

But we never take the time to really say, "If I politically want to go to Congress, if I want to go to the Senate or the Assembly, what are the kinds of things that I need to know in order for me to cross that border?" And that is getting out of that local community, what we call grassroots politics, and that is, I think, in essence, a great theory, because that can get you places; but you need more than that.

And what we need and what we lack is the kinds of obstacles that you talked about. We need money. We don't have — we are a community that we don't invest in our own people. We need to know how to fund-raise money. We need to set up our own PACs, Political Action Committee, so that we can really have the money, because it costs a lot of money to run a campaign. We need to know the name of the game, how is it that a committee functions.

You know, there's a lot of training that goes on in what we call the political committees. White women and black women tend to get organized and form their own political PACs, and they do their own training for their own women.

We're doing some of that in New Jersey. We started to do that, but very few times did you see that kind of support, training for all the Latinas to get, and to break the myth, because it is a difficult job. You know, it's not an easy thing to say, "I want to be a politician." In our community, we downgrade the role of a politician. A politician is perceived as dirty, as not something you want to do.

My God, I have seven years of experience in a leadership institute training Latina women to run for office. I still haven't been able to convince one to run, you know, for the Assembly, because they are afraid to death. We got one to run, at least, for Publico Freeholder. We got a couple ones for the council. So we're really breaking ground in the political arena.

Those that made it did not make it because basically it was a grassroots campaign. They made it because they had the money, they knew somebody with the resources to endorse them and back them up. They were much bigger than just community. They had a lot of research, knowledge, information, and knew the political system well enough to get there, and they had what we call very well financed campaigns and a great manager, like the woman from New York, Nydia Velazquez, you know, who really tackled an incredible campaign. We happen to be lucky enough to have the campaign manager here, if she doesn't get angry at me for introducing her. That is Pat Castro, who is in the back, who happens to be one of my mentors and one of my role models in my state. She

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certainly knew what it took to, you know, head a political campaign.

Let me say, the other obstacles that I think are why we don't happen: lack of family support, and this is all in my book, in my research; you know, lack of what I call community commitment. And we're not monolithic. Let me tell you, it's terrible that we think that our community should represent all of us or represent all our issues. We're not monolithic, for God's sake. You know, that doesn't mean because I'm Hispanic — I'm reminded of what Cisneros (phonetic) said at one meeting a couple weeks ago when we met with him, and we said, "What are you going to move Latinas' agenda forward?" He said, "Wait a minute. I am the Secretary of Housing, and I represent that. Don't hold me to the lack of no agenda. You guys have got to push for that," he said. And I think that we will be unfair when we just say sometimes to the Latino candidate, "You've got to support every Latino thing." We realize we get elected there, but that's what I mean, we're not monolithic. We need to be fair to our candidates.

Ms. Guadalupe: I wanted to ask —

Dr. Sierra: I'd like to respond to the question. I also want to add an answer from a different vantage point. Not to suggest that it's insignificant in terms of what we do or don't do as a Latino community, in terms of taking advantage or trying to seize opportunities to increase our numbers in political office, and so on, but I want to turn the question around to examine the political system that, frankly, has never welcomed us or has been very reluctant to welcome us as participants in that political system, a political system that doesn't welcome us as people of color, much less as women of color.

So it seems to me that some of this discussion needs to focus on what are those structural barriers, what are those systemic barriers to our full incorporation into these political processes.

Now, let me draw out some very quickly that I don't think are the fault of women, so to speak, or the fault of Latinas or even of our community. They are situations that are now fundamentally in our social system.

For example, one very pragmatic concern that affects all women when they make a personal decision whether to enter politics or not: child care and the whole idea of who is responsible for the family's welfare and for the kids' upbringing. You know, despite a lot of rhetoric and despite some social change on the issue, rock bottom, women are still seen as bearing the primary responsibility. Does that have political consequences? You bet it does.

What it means is that women have to count on the support of the spouse, children, or they have to delay their decision to enter politics because of that responsibility.

Another example is this political system draws disproportionately and proves disproportionately people who are in business or who are in law into elected office. Both of those professional areas, women, and Latina women in particular, are found to be underrepresentative.

Now, at the same time that I say that, I'm not suggesting then that we all figure out how to get into business or law. I want to change the system. I want to say that women who are social providers, women who are educators, that women who are business people, and so on and so forth, have every right, and the system should recognize that. The system should recruit and should support and should invite people from different walks of life into the participatory arena, because then they will bring different kinds of values and experiences to bear.

And, finally, certainly look at the support of elites, of party elites and political elites. Men, by and large, are less dependent, for example, on party apparatus, on party organizations, to help support their entry into elected office, because men can count on more resources. They can count on — there's actually some very good data that shows that women have to get involved at the very grassroots local level, which means in our case school board elections.

How many men do we know that can surpass, that can skip those entry-level positions and start maybe even running for mayor the first time in office, or even higher, even a statewide office or something of that sort? It's because other resources, other connections, other networks privilege them.

So I want to just remind us that we have to look at what I would call the system characteristics that proceed to act as barriers to our participation.

...we never take the time to really say, "If I politically want to go to Congress, if I want to go to the Senate or the Assembly, what are the kinds of things that I need to know in order for me to cross that border?"

Ms. Guadalupe: You had a question?

The Audience: My name is Carmen Cordero. I'm from New York City, and I'm one of the coordinators of the Phone Bank in the Political Action in the nation. It's not only New York City.

One of the points that we have to agree, when we have candidates that run for any seat, we have to support them. They come to us. We interview, and they agree with the issue that ones to represent, this is the person that we support.

In tens of women, I haven't see — only a few ones come to us to be supported. This is the first time that the women is supposed to look, "Who is this strong group for political action who can support me?" Don't go only to the community church, because they need more. We're looking for that.

And the second one is any time that we have Spanish woman who come to us, the first thing that she is to do is forget to speak Spanish with the groups, and go after the Spanish support, never talking in Spanish, and a lot of the Spanish women who support her would like to hear. This is something we have to be very careful about. Thank you.

And because Nydia calls me (inaudible) to make her to come out, talk to us, because they tried to do

it. The game is that, to close any channel that we have. Nydia came and the person that she's talking with were talking in Spanish. A group of mothers was there, and this is important. This is important for the Spanish community, too.

Ms. Guadalupe: Do you think that Latinas are too dependent on PACs, because there is no other —

Dr. Santiago: No, I think that's her point. I don't know if you heard her, is that Latinas, in essence, are depending on particularly the local communities, and they're not — what we need to encourage is — and I think what I'm hearing her saying is exactly what I understand from all the Latinas that have ran successfully for office; and, that is, that they defined their own political career as one that is connected to the community. By that, we mean that we talk the language of the people, and it's a different kind of politics, and that's what we're trying to define here in this dialogue, that we bring to the table different kinds of politics that the mainstream structure of the system just don't want to acknowledge.

For example, a political group, you know, and the Freehold — the county politicians, those that control politics, a lot of times don't acknowledge the fact that you as a local politician need to connect to that community, that there's politics of participation in that community, that you have to be able to identify with that community, and you have to relate to that community. You have to speak their language. You have to invest in that kind of politics and at the level of sophistication of community.

...one very pragmatic concern that affects all women when they make a personal decision whether to enter politics or not: child care and the whole idea of who is responsible for the family's welfare and for the kids' upbringing. You know, despite a lot of rhetoric and despite some social change on the issue, rock bottom, women are still seen as bearing the primary responsibility.

And then there's another level of sophistication, and that's what I'm saying, knowing when to go to a PAC, knowing when to talk to your chairman, party leader, and saying — and bringing that community to put pressure on that system that you just talked about. That does not, it will not, it refuses, it will continue to refuse to say, "I'm going to get that seat for a Latina."

You know, they're saying, "Where are the numbers?" We're giving them the numbers. They're not going to give it to us. So it's really become more difficult for Latinas to get in. Your districts like, for example, in New Jersey, Essex County, where you have a large majority of Latinas, you still don't have a Latina council woman running; and, when she wants to run, she doesn't get endorsed by the party chairman.

So, knowing how to break that glass, you know, the little glass, it's going to be essential for Latina women — and part of it has to do with how much money can you raise, because they will tell you that. You know, if you get maybe $50,000, you have a seat for a Latina bestowed by the party's chair. So a white man or a Latino man doesn't have to do that. They will select an incompetent for a complacent role from our community that will now represent those people sometimes before they'll support Latina women.

So those are the kinds of, I think, issues that are going to be very essential to us, and that's why the PACs are so important.

Ms. Guadalupe: I'd like to first introduce Congressman Jose Serrano from New York City. Thank you for coming.

Chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

Congressman, I wanted to direct a question to you. You've been here in the Congress for a number of years. Do you see a changing role for Lastinas in Congress?

Mr. Serrano: First let me apologize for not being here on time but I was in the other one.

I've been here a little over three years now and I've been joined by Nydia Velazquez and by Lucille Roybal-Allard and by a lot of other women incidentally who share common issues with the three Latino women.

I find that the presentation that a Latino woman brings to the discussion is totally different at times and healthier than what has been happening in the past. If I'm measuring my words it's for two reasons; one because I'm physically exhausted and two because one has to be aware of the fact that we're still living in a time when usage of the wrong word signals the wrong message and there are some people who don't want us to categorize men in some ways and women in some ways. Let me tell you something, there was a special reason why Janet Reno sounded the way she did today, and a board member of this Institute came to me and said "I'm not convinced — I'm not convinced that we have to have more women in government," and I said "Why?" I said because she spoke as a mother and as a woman caring for her child. She spoke more about protecting the child than incarcerating the child.

Now that is a politically incorrect statement in some communities because I'm not supposed to draw distinction between my behavior as an elected official and your behavior as a woman elected official. But I think since we are amongst the family we should be free to say that, that there is a sensitivity that has come to the table with Latino women getting elected to office that was not there before. A sensitivity that speaks about issues that some women in the early days of the movement were not allowed to discuss because they were supposedly — your equality to males means that you no longer discuss anything about taking care of children because you're supposed to share it.Well but when you're discussing the most important and powerful government's day-care program there is really no one better equipped to talk about it than the person who had to rush to work and that before she rushed to work she rushed to take a child to a day-care center. The fact of life is that that is not shared equally in the society.

So that people are now beginning to attempt to explain that without getting beaten up, that yes, women do bring a role to the bargaining table which used to be considered an improper role when we grew up in my political generation of the '60s.

...there is a sensitivity that has come to the table with Latino women getting elected to office that was not there before.

In the '60s we went through a time when those of us who wanted equality totally wanted to change the perception of what role women played in society but at the same time women were still taking care of children.

Now we're discussing Head Start and day care so now you have people at the table saying no, see you really don't know that. And they're smart enough and political enough not to say you don't know that because you're a man. They're saying "Let me tell you, you just don't know that, let me explain to you what really goes on in a Head Start program, what goes on at the school, let me tell you about principals who won't allow parents to visit the school during the day." What they're really saying is the principal won't allow of mothers to visit the school during the day because that's 90-percent of the people who would visit the school during the day.

And so that is on the table. What is fascinating and very positive is that some women have been allowed, unfortunately have been allowed, to sneak through and some deadhead men have not been elected to office and so the people we're getting are so together in their thoughts that the presentation is one that cannot be argued against.

Now in this Congress, which is the question, the impact of Nydia Velazquez discussing banking — now listen closely — that in fact is a statement, it's not Nydia now discussing social services, it's Nydia sitting next to the chairman of the banking committee and talking about how the banking community does or does not discriminate against certain neighborhoods, and when Nydia walks with Secretary Cisneros through the streets of Brooklyn or Queens or Lower Manhattan it is not in Nydia's case still seen as "There goes the woman congressperson," or "the congresswoman." It is Nydia Velazquez, an expert on the issue of the housing needs of that community discussing the issue.

The impact, that's for sure, the impact is real, the impact was seen three days ago here when women gathered in the well of the house and used their influence to defeat legislation that spoke about family planning in a negative way. So the impact is here from what I think has to continue to be done more than anything else is that female members of congress, and especially the three Latino women that we have should be supported strongly, should be criticized in private only if they need be — and I don't even worry about the fact that they usually get a much louder applause than I get anywhere I go. I think that's a proper expression and something that has to happen.

But they need more than ever now to understand, and we need to understand, that there is an old guard here that doesn't like freshman in general, freshman Latinos makes them nervous, and freshman Latino females could be a major problem.

Dr. Cruz Takash: I'm Dr. Paula Cruz Takash. I'm an anthropologist in the Department of — in San Diego and Chris Sierra at the table mentioned that I have been involved this last year and a half in research on Chicano-Latino elected officials. Right now our study is only on Chicano-Latinos in California. Chris and a number of other Latino scholars are looking for funds at this moment to extend this study across the country.

I am right now just finishing the first article on this survey and I wanted to make a couple of comments that I think address a number of the issues that were raised here, both by the Congressman and by the other speakers.

One, I think that we need to remember that Latino women proportionately — even though we have only three women at this point in the Congress —proportionately Latino women are represented in elected official positions more so than white women. More so than other women. And so I think this is a figure, one that the NALEO has charted over the last couple of years. We need to be telling our community and we need to be internalizing ourselves. We need —rather than the explanations for our lack power which tend to go along the lines of our passivity, these kinds of explanations, a machismo, et cetera.

Now in this Congress, which is the question, the impact of Nydia Velazquez discussing banking —— now listen closely —— that in fact is a statement, it's not Nydia now discussing social services, it's Nydia sitting next to the chairman of the banking committee and talking about how the banking community does or does not discriminate against certain neighborhoods...

We certainly have machismo, so does the white women's group, this is why they fought in our fighting the women's movement, this is why we also — but I think that those kind of explanations have limited power to explain why we've been kept out of power.

The kinds of issues that Dr. Sierra wrote, the structural values, to our penetrating elective office are much more important and much more profound in the local levels and congressional — we're talking about district elections, at-large election systems which predominate throughout the country and many of our challenges to break this kind of system, to get district elections which allow for the greater penetration of women, progressives and all kinds of people of color.

So I think that we need to, you know, focus less on

Latinos and all of know about some folks who are jealous of one another's success, the machismo, et cetera, and really look at the kinds of barriers that truly have kept us out historically and continue to do so.

I would like to ask Congresswoman Ros Lehtinen if the fact that two other Latinos have now joined her I would be very curious and to see if even though there are only three of them does that make a difference in terms of her political behavior.

And a couple of other things I wanted to mention is the issue that Chris raised about day care. In my study I do find that Latino women of the majority of our elected officials in California are in their 40s and up. But this does not mean that they, like other women, have not put off entering formal political office because of child care issues. Most of these women, although they're 40 and above, have already had their children and their children are old enough to take care of themselves according to their responses. And I think that again it's one more of the kind of barriers that we face as women and as Latinos.

Audience: I wanted to throw out this question to the panelists and to the audience too. Now the fact that we have Velazquez on the banking committee does that — is that interpreted by some people in the community or in the non-Latino community that "Well, she's a woman, she's Hispanic, she's supposed to be in social services or in family kind of oriented legislation and that now she's not as caring?" That there are some — for instance Senator Kassenbaum has made a point of not being on any committee that's related to family issues.

Dr. Sierra: I'm sure that there's probably some sense of it out there but I have no idea. I'd like to respond to that question with regard to the kinds of challenges then that confront Latino legislators and women legislators. I think if anything men probably make those assumptions and judgments more so than women. It seems to me that the whole point of the women's movement, Latino women's movement, has been to broaden our participation and expertise and impact and so on and not confine it in any one way.

But nevertheless that question points to some dilemmas for women and the dilemma is — as a matter of fact earlier studies of just women in legislative office have pointed and actually identified that among some women legislators, particularly those who are not found in state legislatures that have who they would consider supportive colleagues, they might be then few in number, perceived in a sense as tokens, but by and large to establish their credentials in the legislative arena they have felt compelled to avoid women's issues and to establish themselves outside that arena doesn't mean that they don't care about women's specific issues, but there is kind of a pressure on them to perform in ways that men do.

At the same time I want to speak a little bit too in kind of a related issue. I think the politics of numbers does make a difference on two levels; women may be freer to feel that they can take the lead then as representatives of women's issues if they feel that other colleagues, both men and women, can join in those efforts, will support them in those efforts, and that their credentials aren't totally dependent on how they're perceived — or that they're not perceived as only women's advocates.

But at the same time it seems that as more women do become part of the legislative arena, do have some evidence that they at the same time feel more comfortable then in doing precisely what was mentioned as the example for Nydia Velazquez; that is they take on then — they feel more comfortable with — and stronger position to start to show their expertise and seize the opportunity to show their expertise in other areas.

So I think that really has a lot to do with adding numbers to the numbers of women in a particular unit. I would like to ask Congresswoman Ros Lehtinen if the fact that two other Latinos have now joined her I would be very curious and to see if even though there are only three of them does that make a difference in terms of her political behavior.

But the proportion question, the question of do numbers make a difference, I think they do and I think that research is suggesting that they can allow women to be both more assertive as advocates of women's specific issues and at the same time broaden out in their expertise.

Ms. Guadalupe: Do you have a comment?

Audience: I'm Maria Metasenior (phonetic) and — well

...we're talking about a 21st century type of politics, one that is inclusive of a new kind of America, a new community of people here that is representative of what we call, you know, a mosaic of people.

two different things that have been said I can relate to. I am now the president of the board of trustees in Sanyo (phonetic) Community College district and I never imagined myself running for office, that was never something that was part of my goals, my view of myself, et cetera. I think Republicans have the run of them as related to what Paula just mentioned and that is that my children were getting ready to graduate from high school so for the first time then I was able, without so much guilt, to begin to involve myself more than I already had been as a professional, and I'm also a professor and I had already been working and active in the community, but now I could devote myself more. As you probably realize when you get into the political arena it's 24-hour a day job, you just — you don't stop.

Mr. Serrano: It's 23.

Ms. Metasenior: You know, it's very difficult to go home and be aware of how are your kids doing, are they doing their homework, and so for me one of the

big issues was the fact that my children were now at a place where I wasn t so concerned about where they were headed, et cetera. I think that we need to address that emotional bind that we as women are in as we think about ourselves and those kinds of things because we do have too many judgments and all of us want to do the right thing all the time and the right thing is to serve our community and to live up to our talents and our abilities. But the right thing is also to nurture our children and to make sure they're okay before we start taking care of the rest of the world or is it? I mean so we have to keep weighing those kinds of things for ourselves. And those are very real for us I think as women.

Another thing I wanted to comment on was the importance of PACs. I was helped by a Latino PAC in California when I started running and the moral support that gave me was more profound than the money. I mean the money really mattered but the fact that these women wanted to see me in that position and were willing to give me some of their funds and take interest in my campaign meant a great, great deal to me.

The last thing was that the people who helped me the most in the real sense of being there for me, introducing me to people, urging me to do things were Latino women and they were the most important people in some very significant ways in my having been elected.

Dr. Santiago: I'd like to respond to the question. From the point of view that we believe that the challenge before Nydia Velazquez and the new leadership that is going to run for congress or even the legislatures and senate is to understand the role and the role is not one just to do Latino issues but the role is also to do all issues for all people. And because once we get elected or once we're there we are held accountable. So the role is one as an activist, as a broker in that community and that one that brings a new name to what I call politics and participation and we can be better at it because we're talking about a 21st century type of politics, one that is inclusive of a new kind of America, a new community of people here that is representative of what we call, you know, a mosaic of people.

And so that responsibility in essence is major for us. I would say that the model, the cultural model of politics today, does not understand that. They don't even see that. What they see is a person of color coming in and being the token and not having the information. The under estimation that happens, the level of under estimation that occurs at those levels is just incredible but yet we are breaking through that and we're making some progress. Every time that they under estimate us our women move forward and they create space.

And so knowing how to do that as strategically and sophisticatedly enough to be able to win battles I think is going to be of essence. And so I'm going to be watching carefully as a scholar the successes of the women and also bringing women more forward.

But I think we need to understand that, you know, they are not just, you know, just anyone to be elected and not just any women. I think the fact that we're brokers, we're activists, we bring the agenda, we can work with diverse groups of people and still we can talk about the numbers in the bank and we can represent the interests of this country is going to be of major importance to the new type of politics and the definition of what that means for our communities.

Ms. Guadalupe: Is there a question over here?

Audience: Yes, my name is (inaudible) from New York City and I just want to let Dr. Santiago know that we are considering and working on replicating the legislation in New Jersey and New York so we'll be calling you about that.

But the question or comment that I want to bring forth is that the conversation up until now, the dialogue up to now, has focused on electing women to political office and I do not want to underestimate the importance of that but as Dr. Santiago mentioned earlier public policy goes beyond just the legislative initiatives. There are regulatory and judicial vehicles as well and I think we would be remiss if this workshop is on women and public policy to not talk about the contributions or directions that Latino women should take in those other areas.

We don't appoint enough Latinos — never mind women, Latinos in positions of setting regulations, commissions,boards, bank boards, you know, banks that set regulation.

And in fact an important lesson that I think we all have to be reminded about is the whole issue that once a legislative initiative goes into effect there is a whole question, a whole different ball game on how that's implemented. We've seen lots of wonderful pieces of legislation go down the drain because the states or whomever, you know, whatever entity has misinterpreted, maligned, done all sorts of things and made it totally opposite of what the original intention was.

About a year ago — no, about two years ago I was at a news office on health policy in New York City as a senior aids policy analyst trying to implement the (inaudible) and let me tell you that was an incredible feat and very difficult and the original intent of the legislation often got lost in the sauce, in the process of trying to implement it.

So that part of what I'd like to see happen today is to talk a little bit about the other avenues for effecting public policy and about the issue of creating a vision, a vision of Latino women's public policy vision because I think it's not just providing — although let me tell you I'm very happy to have Nydia in congress — it's not just about supporting individual women but about creating a vision and creating an agenda that everybody can work on strategically and make change really happen.

Ms. Guadalupe: Did you want to comment on that?

Dr. Santiago: Yes, I agree with you totally. I'm one of those people that I'm working at all angles in my work as I do and then write, but I believe that there's four ways that I think Latino women can make

differences in public policy: on the local level on board of educations, community activists. But also an important factor right now that is — all over the country is the factor of regulation. We don't appoint enough Latinos — never mind women, Latinos in positions of setting regulations, commissions, boards, bank boards, you know, banks that set regulation. We are basically unnoticed and nobody is talking about how do we make the transition to put people in positions of commissions that you could set new regulations. One of the areas that — are talking about in this country that we need to pass into is the area of policy. That policy has to be between — as you see we have the first lady tackle the area of health. For the first time we have someone with that amount of power and information. Only — it's only her, because nobody else can do the work in health, but her — why? Because she is the first lady, she's good at what she does, she knows what she's doing and she also knows when to support congress. She's also very politically savvy. But here you have the other agenda, welfare reform. My God, if you look at the area of welfare reform it has to be rewritten. It was written in the 1950s, 1940s, and it has to be rewritten.

So everybody says we need to go back to the books, we need to set new rules and write them with the new problems of society and the new influences of the new culture that is emerging with — you know, tons of problems. As you know we know that.

You can't just tell me how you've reached the point where you're equal and now you tell me you can't make it to the club because you're taking care of the children. You're a lawyer, you're a doctor, you're a banker, you found ways to do other things, you got to find a way to the club too.

The other area is the area of the Supreme Court. You know, how many appointees have we made to the Supreme Court that are Latinos? Ha. You know, and look at our states and look at our — you know, what we're doing. Very, very little. So that is another area of public policy that I think we need to pay attention to.

And then of course the area of advocacy, community organizing, and there's a lot of that that people don't pay much attention to, but that we need to get our young people excited about, you know, positions that we talked about earlier. You know, becoming attorneys, becoming — you know, getting into the non traditional areas so that we can be in positions of leadership because when you talk about vision and agenda it is leaders with new energies and new information and knowledge that can set those agendas.

And certainly public policy is what I call the forum, you know, where you can groom those ideas and you can challenge those in the mainstream culture that will not — and I continue to say it's no longer that people are just indiscriminatory, they're not going to let us in it, doesn't matter what because there's a threat now to access of the power and what I like at least about this administration is that I begin to see this administration helping people like me, or people like my community that can begin to make a difference and that can begin to set some new regulations for the kinds of things that you and I are talking about here today.

So I think this is going to be very important that we go beyond that.

Ms. Guadalupe: Congressman, you had a comment?

Mr. Serrano: Yes, I'm a little concerned about your statement only because I've been in this business 19 years and I know that this country revolves around politics and elected office. It doesn't revolve around dollars; people think it does. If it did then why would millionaires want to be in public office. Cynics will say so they can steal more. This is not the kind of a system where there's a treasury and you stick your hand in and take money and stuff it in your pockets.

...I would argue that women would tend to favor much more public arenas and methods of bargaining, negotiation and compromise as opposed to the ones that are much more based on sort of personal connections and private kinds of personal connections.

There is the power and the prestige and the ability for some well-intentioned millionaires to change public policy. So that no matter how much we care about other things that we have to do it is through electing people to office who then can help appoint people to office that I think we will make the quickest and most noticeable public policy change.

Now with that comes certain responsibilities that we all have to accept. Men, Latino men, have to accept them in some ways and Latinas have to accept them even in dealing with Latino men. Example: you will find in local political club houses that very word "professional Latinos." You will rarely find professional Latinas. They somehow do not go to the local club house and I'm one who's fought always against local club houses but I'm telling you how that system works.

So that in addition to the discrimination and the set aside if you will by Latinos themselves, by men not letting women participate, you also have the fact that while it's true that 70 percent of any political club you find for instance in New York City the people who are doing the ground work to elect all the candidates are women; the professional woman who you can nominate for a judgeship because she's been a lawyer ten years is not a member of the club.

Granted it should not be done that way, it should not be a club house decision, but that's the reality of life. Whereas Latino professional men have no qualms about hanging out at the local political club but Latino professional women for some reason have a problem with that created by someone else or —

Mr. Serrano: But you can't do that to me now. You can't just tell me how you've reached the point where you're equal and now you tell me you can't make it to the club because you're taking care of the children. You're a lawyer, you're a doctor, you're a banker, you found ways to do other things, you got to find a way to the club too.

Now look at me, I'm a congressman. I've been in 19 years — three years in congress, 16 as an assemblyman in New York State. If I had to give out tags to people who did the physical work for me to be elected for these 19 years I would venture to say that about 80 percent of those soldiers, soldieresses, have been women. The reward I can give them politically, and I'm really laying it all out on the table, is good service in terms of how I behave and friendship and loyalty and caring. But when it comes that somebody says to me "Give me a list of someone who could be a commissioner somewhere," I'd have to go to them and almost insult them in many cases by saying, "Do you know a woman lawyer Latina that would be interested in doing this?"

And you know what I usually get? "I told three of them to join and they haven't been — but they don't come." So that's something that's missing there that we need to work on.

And in answer to another comment that was made here about how, you know, is it improper for Nydia to be on banking, is that seen as a turncoat or something, you know. That's a problem for another workshop. That's the fact that constituents have the knack to always know what's best for you in your political career, you know. "And why the hell did you leave education and labor, Serrano, and get on appropriations?"

Well, you know, because that's one of the three top committees in the house, right? But the click has been education, welfare, housing and the minute they think you're leaving that — and I didn't — I'm on the education, labor, health and human services sub committee of the appropriations committee. So I try to explain to them I'm no longer passing laws on education. I now take laws that come from the education committee and I determine whether they're going to get any money or not.

But that's not a female/male thing. Latinos have this thing that they block you into certain things. The last one is the classic one for me (in Spanish) —

So the answer is yes, for 100 years white males have been making policy south of the border because we don't get involved.

Ms. Guadalupe: Did you want to add to that?

Ms. Sierra: Yes, I have a couple of things to say.

You know it also might be — in terms of the example of the political club, which I think is a good example to raise — there are all kinds of ways in which we could examine what it means or what it implies.

I would suggest that we think about how women — again maybe some gender differences — and how men and women view the politics of negotiation, bargaining and compromise. And I would probably — I would argue that women would tend to favor much more public arenas and methods of bargaining, negotiation and compromise as opposed to the ones that are much more based on sort of personal connections and private kinds of personal connections.

Think about how it would look because if you bargain and compromise and negotiate — again thinking of even the differences between white politicians and politicians of color or white communities and communities of color — essentially back door politics has always disenfranchised people who don't have access into those doors. And so there may be indeed a very important gender difference here in terms of how women prefer to negotiate and deal with power and deal with politics.

So it seems to me that it's real important to suggest that we don't simply join those private clubs, that we disband them.

The other comment is — to return to your point — I absolutely agree that the policy of implementation is a very very important arena. I would be remiss as a political scientist if I didn't say that and certainly the fact that women also are important to consider as policymakers in that arena is very significant.

But I think someone who thinks we started to say or initially — also with regard to women legislators also have a bearing on decision-making processes and how women perhaps go about making those decisions. Let me suggest for example some research that is the focus of studies of white women at this point in time is looking at — again, the kind of values, going back to the question of values, what are the gender differences with regard to political values and how do men and women conceive of notions of justice and morality and power and so on. And again I think that some of the suggestions are very very provocative. For example, political scientists are suggesting, based on some work of psychologists and social psychologists, that women are in a sense more inclusive of their definitions of morality and justice and so on. And that there is again the sort of reference point is not individual interests or individual advancement which tends to be, it seems, the framework for men, the point of reference for men.

...men see abstract questions of justice and equality in terms of individual rights. It appears — it's not the sentiment but it appears that women tend to see those kinds of issues with regard to a larger reference, a community or a collectivity.

They reduce — or men see abstract questions of justice and equality in terms of individual rights. It appears — it's not the sentiment but it appears that women tend to see those kinds of issues with regard to a larger reference, a community or a collectivity. So let us suggest that what if we're making judgments and judges for example of the meaning of the 14th amendment and equal protection of the laws. Could it be that women might have a more inconclusive definition or application of

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some kind of constitutional principle than men do. And could it be that our notion of civil liberties for example with more and more women addressing these questions either as judges or bureaucrats or whatever, or implementers of law, could it be that our idea of civil liberties, our very important freedoms, personal freedoms, could it be that women might see them being redefined and important to see them as not just individual rights but as collective rights. Rights for a larger community, communities in which women feel that they represent.

...it's just so difficult for me to do that, I have to devote my life. I mean I think I want to have children — I mean I see the politicians there and they're so — it's such an ungrateful job, I have to tell you.

So those are the kinds of things that if you think about gender considerations might be real provocative and maybe give us a vision of — I'd like to see a feminist Latino vision — in terms of what policy means.

Audience: But let me say something — first of all let me introduce myself. My name is Patricia Sosa (phonetic), and I am Director of Public Outreach for the Western Reform Working Group (phonetic) and we had the opportunity of meeting with Gloria yesterday and after this meeting we're actually going to have a meeting with Hispanic leaders and the chairs of the working group and I'm realizing that 90 percent of the people coming to the meeting are men because the people there are the ones that are heads of the large organizations that we're inviting.

So I have to say that in terms of policy making and from that administrative angle I think it's very important to play a greater role — I feel very privileged and also very scared that I'm the only Latino woman in the staff and I have to play a role of trying to bring the community into the process.

Luckily my responsibilities was to invite people into the process so I decided that I'm only inviting my friends and my friends are the Latino community so I'm very happy to be there.

And I really want you — encourage you to be part of that process.

But the second thing I want to talk about, I'm actually an elected official at the very very local level. I'm an advisory neighborhood commissioner in the District of Columbia and one of the experiences I have, and I haven't heard much comment about it — even though I live in Latino neighborhood — I live in the most integrated neighborhood in the District and it's the largest Latino neighborhood. However the Latinos that live in that neighborhood do not vote so my constituency, the people that voted for me, are actually mostly Anglos and African Americans. So I'm a Latino leader in my neighborhood but I have to be responsive and I have to work on coalition because otherwise I'm not going to get reelected. And it's been a tremendous dilemma for me because I get a lot of pressure from the Latino leadership and make me feel sometimes that I'm not responsive to their needs, that I'm betraying my race and I think so very very painful for me because I do feel very strongly about my Latino heritage and my responsibilities to the community. I do want to serve as a role model. I don't want to deny my community in order to be able to be effective in my working in my neighborhood.

The other thing is at the agency level in the District of Columbia is sort of the breeding grounds for higher office so I would be a likely candidate for city-wide office, city council. And I have gotten calls from friends saying "Patricia, you should seriously consider, you're already there, you're exposed, and you should be doing this." And it's just so difficult for me to do that, I have to devote my life. I mean I think I want to have children — I mean I see the politicians there and they're so — it's such an ungrateful job, I have to tell you. I guess being in congress is a little bit easier.

Mr. Serrano: It's a wonderful lesson, Patricia. Patricia Sosa?

Ms. Sosa: Yes.

Mr. Serrano: I don't even know you're running but I'll endorse you right now.

That's important, you know, that goes with the conversation because if there's going to be a fear of entering the arena then obviously it's a problem and it's a rewarding experience. This coming year will be my 20th year. There are regrets, I have a 21-year-old son who I really didn't see grow up and I have a four-year old that I'm not seeing being five in November but you choose that in the process. There might be a child in Lincoln Hospital now getting better AIDS treatment because I exist as a congressman. And there might be people in Puerto Rico who some day may truly be free because I'm a congressman. And there is some lady who will even never meet me who maybe has a better situation in health care because I'm a congressman.

You first of all, you know, for a discussion of another day you don't know how we find ourselves in certain places. Why am I in congress and why did three other guys I grew up with — one died in Vietnam and another one is doing hard time in a state prison, who really don't know those things. We swear that we have this and that but we don't know, the line is very thin. If you're in it and somehow you find yourself in it keep going with it, and it's going to be painful, and you try to find a partner who will understand. And if you don't find a partner who will understand as long as you're true to yourself that's fine also.

But you cannot give up the opportunity if circumstances call upon you to serve, especially when in spite of all the problems we have in this society there are people who live in your District —especially more than in mine — in your area especially more than mine — who come from places where running for public office is taking your life in your hands because a guy in uniform will never allow you to do it. So if you have the chance you go with it, you put your input, you're true to yourself as a woman, as a Latino, and don't worry about the other thing, let me worry about that. I worry about it every night.

Audience: My name is Elva Montolvo (phonetic) and I'm on the committee for Hispanic children and families and I just wanted to pick up on something that Dr. Sierra mentioned in terms of gender differences in decision-making process and the differences that women may tend to see things more collectively than men.

I just wanted to add to that that there are cultural differences also in terms of Latino culture being more collectivist than individualist and that's what makes the difference in having our researchers for Latino perspective looking into gender differences that could add that dimension and look at how much more we're collective, of how we see things differently because of other things in our — other factors in our culture, other values in our culture. And I just wanted to pick up on that that I think it really — you added something — you know, I was sitting here all day thinking what am I going to take back, what have I learned today and I'm going to go back and read more books on gender differences to see how I can add to the cultural awareness training that we do in New York City for human service providers.

Mr. Serrano: But you know in the political process I think there has been a misconception and I'll go back to my earlier statement. You clearly stated that maybe women should break down those private clubs; they're not private, they're open, number one. Number two, women have been handling the work at the club, they just have been kept out of leading the club. We have to find people to move in and lead the club and we have to find male elected officials who are open to that, or male politicians who are open to that.

But I do disagree that women may feel more comfortable — at least from my experience — in group situations that are really one to one. Again going back to my situation, and there are people in this room who do that for me who are women in this room right now, who are visiting here from the Bronx today. They have for 19 years gone and collected 80 percent of the signatures that I need to get on the ballot. But if that ain't one to one I don't know what is because when Doña Juana knocks on her project door —no, it isn't different because it's at the roots of how you start a political movement and for years it's been in the hands of a certain part of the community and we haven't used it properly. We have to expand on it. But to suggest — I mean I would suggest that when Doña Juana at 8:30 or 9:00 doesn't want to open her door for an election day — sure we all talk about electing people we always forget how you elect people. There's what social scientists, political scientists have a problem with is that they haven't collected signatures in a long time and it's very hard at times to understand that situation. I've seen people bargaining one on one for five minutes on a door on election day and that's the best form of one on one bargaining. Or on 1199 in New York, Dennis Rivera and those guys and those ladies send out a group of people on election day you never saw bargaining at that level. Now notice I'm saying at that level — I know there were people shaking heads because we're talking about bargaining at other levels, right? But that level right now in New York may make the difference as to who becomes mayor November 2nd, so we shouldn't discount that as being unimportant. What we have to do is find out what's missing there, how we bring it to the next step, to not tear that down because that's the one thing that has built the political movement for our country.

Ms. Montolvo: And if I understood Dr. Sierra correctly we're not talking about just knocking it down right now, we have to work with it, at least that's my personal opinion. It's there, it exists, and I understand what you're saying but at the same time if you're asking us to join the process we have a different perspective than men. It's the same as when Latino men join the process they wanted to change the rules, they wanted to change the way certain things were done. If we're going to join and continue with business as usual what's the point?

Dr. Santiago: Yeah, I want to respond to that Congressman Serrano, this issue of the club.

I think that there's an important middle ground here and that is I think we need to be in the club and I think we need to decide when we want to be in that club and what rules and conditions. I refuse to go into a club that has active men that is drinking and being disrespectful to me as a Latina woman.

So that if you want me in your club you make sure that you clear out the air so that when I come in there, you know, I'm treated with integrity and I'm treated as a partner in the process. And I'm not talking to you, per se, I'm saying that's the type of involvement that we need to create and the kinds of things that as Latinas we need to set forth. And I go back to my little story, analogy about how I had to handle a white male congressman who said, you know, let's go out on a date so that I can get that bill through. You know, I used that opportunity to educate him and to say "I'm coming, but I'm coming with the women and I come with my community and these are my standards," and so you know I changed the whole thing.

...I was sitting here all day thinking what am I going to take back, what have I learned today and I'm going to go back and read more books on gender differences to see how I can add to the cultural awareness training that we do in New York City for human service providers.

So we have to be smarter also as Latinas and not lose out to the fact of your point that yes, it is important that we understand how it is that it works, how it functions because there are differences in the way that we behave and the way that we think. I mean my God, I wrote a book about those differences, I can give you that look — Latina women have a strong sense of community, Latina women like to cooperate, we work in a collective process of organization, we are better in social rela-

tionships, women think as a group we don't think as individuals. We appreciate the concrete in the national while men give great opinions to what is —

Mr. Serrano: I'm depressed.

Dr. Santiago: And if there are differences I think the point is, is how do we use our differences to then empower ourselves to make that change and that transition and how do we get our brothers, you know, because if something is very important to me and to my community the fact that he's here makes it even of more importance to me as a Latina woman. And I'm going to look to his leadership for him to create access for the Latina women so that it is important, yes, that we know how to walk in and out and that we set new rules in the process because we have integrity and we as Latina women bring a different kind of integrity to the process when we're talking about what is respectful and unrespectful for us as women.

And so I think that is very important and needs to be said and I am always reminded of, you know, of a neighbor, Gunya — (phonetic) in North Camden, you know, in a community very poor who — you know she stands up with a lot of pride and she speaks. She's a lady who has no education but the local politicians call on her on election night because they know she's going to deliver those votes. And so it makes — now I know why they do so, you see, and she has a lot of influence and a lot of power in that community. But when she walks into that room as a community woman who doesn't speak English, but she works with her community and she has a lot of power and she has a lot of integrity.

...we need to decide when we want to be in that club and what rules and conditions. I refuse to go into a club that has active men ... drinking and being disrespectful to me as a Latina woman.

And then, you know, a lot of those white men what are they doing, you know? Because she delivers, the fact that she delivers and she demands that kind of respect and she creates space for others. You know I learned a lot just observing her and I said, my God, we got to begin to demand what is important for us also as women in the process and we have to be able to say to our brothers, "Look now —" you know, there's no way I'm going to the bar for a meeting. I'm one that I'm consistently out there invited, I'm the treasurer of the Democratic party in my state, the treasurer, okay? That makes a big difference to the Democratic party, the only Latina elected to that position in my state.

Let me tell you something, when they have meetings and they want to have it in the local bar I refuse to go. I say, look, you want me at the meeting, you want me to give you the numbers, let's have it in a place where it's respectful for me. I'm not going to a bar. And guess what — they do it. They reschedule it, you know, and they begin to set standards too so that I'm included.

So I think it's also how we, you know, the kinds of things that we also bring to the process.

Dr. Sierra: I just add that I think Congressman Serrano made a mistake — misinterpreted what I said in that of course women understand and deal with one-to-one communication and so on. As a matter of fact if we look at, for example, the whole strategy that right now is being built particularly in the midwest and southwest in terms of grass roots political organizations under the model of the Industrial Areas Foundation for example that is really expanding, particularly in the southwest, with regard to building new models of leadership at the grass roots.

The whole network of informal leadership comes particularly for women — and the whole strategy to develop that grass roots movement is with house-to-house meetings where then the so-called natural leaders of the community, not the formal leaders of the community, but the natural leaders of the community...

The whole network of informal leadership comes — particularly for women — and the whole strategy to develop that grass roots movement is with house-to-house meetings where then the so-called natural leaders of the community, not the formal leaders of the community, but the natural leaders of the community — again going back to some of the things that were said, the who knows the neighborhood caucus, who knows the neighborhood networks. By and large —it's not total — but by and large it's women who are working at that local level. They are the ones that can undertake those house-to-house meetings, they are the ones that absolutely know how to deal in those kinds of personal situations.

What I'm talking about really is — in a very different kind of context though — I'm talking about decision making that takes place in what I would call the context of exclusion. It is men, in terms of what to me a private club invokes, or to me what in maybe the old sense or maybe even now the current sense, of a political machine — let's talk about the old kind of back room caucuses and so on. That context is set up to include some folks and exclude others and it is in that context that I'm talking about dismantling those private clubs. The whole notion that some people are in and some people are out, that's what I'm saying that perhaps women are uncomfortable with and really would like to see decision making made not in such an exclusive or exclusionary arena but in much more of an inclusive one.

Ms. Guadalupe: Did you have a comment?

Audience: Yes. My name is Maria Diaz (phonetic) — I have a lot of voice — and I work with the Dominican Sisters Family House Services in the South Bronx.

I had various comments before but I could summa-

rize what's been happening here this afternoon and I really think — what I really think is that we have to educate our women and we have to educate our people because if it was up to my father I would be a secretary or a nurse. He wouldn't want me to be what I do now, he wouldn't want me to work and walk the streets of the South Bronx and that comes back from culture our parents teach us in a way and supposedly we have to accept that. That's not true, we have our own minds and it's up to us to educate our children, our daughters, that that's not the way, that we could go into politics — and there are other barriers. But until that word is out and until we educate our daughters it won't happen.

So we could summarize everything in education and getting out there.

Dr. Santiago: I want to emphasize something that Patricia said earlier that stayed on my mind and you just reminded me and also Congressman Serrano spoke about it, and that is the importance of really demystifying traditional politics for women. That, you know, we need women to run. I just want to endorse that. I think it's important that we demystify the view that it is nasty, there is no money in it, you know, that — yes, there is some costs that women pay and a tremendous cost is the choices that we make.

But I just — because of the position that I'm in and where I'm at as a Latina woman, which I see myself as an academic and as a broker of public policy, the importance of our voices of our women running for office we need you to do it and I think we need to encourage women. And yet you shouldn't do it blindly. Definitely you'll find a mentor and somebody who can work with you and help you, the kinds of experiences that you're having here in Washington at your age, my God is good and I think that you ought to build on that and try to use it carefully and strategically to position whatever it is you want because you don't want to do it blindly. You want to do it with a plan, you want to be able to do it carefully, and you want to be able to plan that at each stage so that you can — when you get the money that you need to make because it is important.

A lot of times what happens with men is that the women stay home, she works, and you get a lot of support that's — you know, you don't have to deal with the guys — some of them will have to deal with the children and all the other responsibilities. Maybe it's changing, I don't know, but what I know about Latina women is that it's very difficult because of the family responsibilities — the family, our family condemn us when we leave our children — we had our families. My God, you know, feeling guilty we had our three days in Washington because we have a family back home to take care of.

And so the pressures that Latina women have are just tremendous. So plan carefully but I encourage everyone to really consider it as a career.

Ms. Guadalupe: Is there a question over here?

Audience: My name is Gustino Arines (phonetic) and I'm the principal of a new high school in the South Bronx within the congressional district that Congressman Serrano serves. It's a brand new high school and we're cognizant of the importance of your being involved in students for leadership in the community, it's called the South Bronx Academy for Community Leadership and our responsibility to our young women students and we're looking at this very carefully.

And this is regarding the topic of my concern of — and I know it's very evident in New York City is this creeping what I call neo chauvinism among young people that's exemplified in their music and talk and what young men call young girls in New York City, bitches, whores, and I mean that's the vocabulary and that's the perception. I don't know how it is in other parts of the city but something that I take as a father and as a person who will not allow that to happen not in any environment. I mean what is the feeling around the country and the perception of the speakers and their opinion among this creeping that is really going back in time in terms of our young people, young males on relating to young females and all the implications that that has.

Ms. Guadalupe: Do you want to comment on that, Dr. Sierra?

Dr. Sierra: Well I think that's a very important point on that concern. I guess I'd like to hear audience responses to that. With working with young people in the University, you know, on the one level I'm sort of in a kind of a different environment, a special environment, it's kind of — if nothing else men and women kind of know the right answers. You know, they sort of know that there's something in the air that suggests that we should have gender equality and things of that sort. So I think in my interpersonal reactions with — as a faculty member dealing with students — I'm not likely to see the kinds of things, the genre that you're talking about.

I think it's important that we demystify the view that it is nasty, there is no money in it, you know, that — yes, there is some costs that women pay and a tremendous cost is the choices that we make.

And having said that, at the same time we know that, particularly I think in the national environment, and think about how many — even recently columns have been written, books are being published, journalists are writing — in a sense critiquing or criticizing values that were promoted by the women's movement and of course they target or they represent the white women's movement, rarely do we see our perspective as women of color in terms of our women's movement, how we might define that.

But I think there's a lot of — to use maybe an overworked term — but a lot of backlash certainly — certainly against people of color but also against certain kinds of things that maybe ten or twenty years ago we thought were now in place in terms of important values. You're right. We cannot assume that young

people or different generations and a different generation of young people share some of the values that we might believe in now.

So I think that's real important in terms of bringing us a dose of reality here when, you know, talking here at a panel on Latina Women and Public Policy we're making certain assumptions here about the audience and about values and about gender equality as a goal and things of that sort.

Perhaps those values are not shared and we need to discuss those, we need to understand that there are different dynamics out there.

Ms. Guadalupe: Is there a comment on that?

Audience: My name is Louis Amata (phonetic) and I'm with — one of the federal bureaucrats — but that's not what I want to talk about.

I'm also a Latino gay man and this weekend the national Latino gay and lesbian organization — I think in the Latino gay and lesbian community the issue of co-gender organizing and gender equality has always been an issue that we probably, as gay and lesbian Latino men, I'm proud to say that this year's conference theme is co-gender organizing, today's strategies, tomorrow's action. So I think that is something that we in the Latino lesbian and gay community is something that we're embracing that we need to grapple with that and we need to deal with that and I think that until we begin to deal with that equality and the co-gender issue we're not going to go forward.

We cannot assume that young people or different generations and a different generation of young people share some of the values that we might believe in now.

Dr. Santiago: I agree with that and you bring a new issue to the table that you are brave to bring forward that we don't talk about in our community. We are the most homophobic community that there is if you ask me and in that sense certainly the issue of sexual preferences and homosexuality is one that we need to discuss in our community. You know in academia of course we discuss this very opening with out students and also the issue of race gender and equality but what I'm finding is is that we have a lot of ignorance not only in the dominant culture but even our mono communities our own value system about the whole issue of differences. And, you know, we also have a lot of discrimination and biases among our own groups of people because again we are not monolithic. You see we are also a part of the system and we have inherited the same kind of bad habits.

And so we have a lot to learn as a community and a lot of work to do with our young people. And part of the problem that I see is the crisis that we're having in education when you look at the lower levels of education and you see what's happening there, we lose somebody like for example Joseph Fernandez in New York City, you know, because of his vision and his ideological position on this issue.

You know — and it was a Latina who made the difference if what I hear is correct and, you know, I think that sets us really behind.

So we need to begin to see where we are at the local levels and what kind of work we can do in the schools to begin to bring the issue of equality of women, our value system, the issue of a new society that is here. I mean, you know, we're not going to send homosexuals back to the moon and we're not going to send Latinos to the moon. You know, we're not going to send blacks or Asians. We are in a society here that is here to stay in the next decade and those are going to be the challenges, you know, looking at the issue of ethnic conflict among the three communities and also among the gays and lesbians also.

So that is the incredible challenge for the younger people in the audience to begin to tackle and to open your minds and get out of your boxes because the challenges ahead are just many, and complex. If you think it's complex now by the time you get a job and become a policy maker things will be much more complex. The ethical issues involved as well, much, much, much complex.

Ms. Guadalupe: Do you have a question audience?

Audience: My name is Sonya — (phonetic) and I'm at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. I'm glad that you brought out the complexity position because that's something that I wanted to comment to.

Professor Sierra before mentioned in asking all those questions I'm really glad that you posed it in terms of questions. Could it be that Latinas will do their — bring their school — have this kind of perspective because I think that sometimes I'm a little afraid of the research that tends to have us make assumptions or generalizations that can really be very dangerous for us. Because as Professor Santiago has said the person in New York who mated with him was a Latina and so there are some Latinas who are not my sisters. There are some women who are not my sisters, there are some people of color who are not, you know, who I don't relate to. So that I think we have to understand that perhaps we come in with different perspectives but that that's not generalizable, that there are so many differences among us and we have to understand those complexities because otherwise we are at a loss for example when a Senator Feinstein turns her back on immigrants.

And so how did that happen? You know, a level head, she shouldn't be like that and so on. We have to understand that there are a lot of different types of women and the reason that I'm concerned about it is that as an educator working in the field of multi-cultural education I see that sometimes the very research that we do that we hope will be used to the service of educating all children is used against us. So that teachers say, oh, Latinos, so therefore they like to work together, let's let them share books instead of giving each one of them a book. That happens — that happens and we have to be very careful about those kinds of generalizations and assumptions.

So while I think that this kind of research I'm very

supportive. I think it's wonderful and that it can really help us a great deal. I also want us as a community to approach it with a lot of caution.

Dr. Santiago: Now to many of us, you know, will be reacting to see that the other point is as how the Anglo culture is viewing the ethnic differences of our community and I think that Dr. Sierra's point —and I do support her point in my work — because what's happening is in the main stream culture when we write this kind of research and we say "Look, we are different and the way we an take — our culture is different" and it makes — you know who understands it, corporate America, that's my best example. When Agutina (phonetic) you know when we — (inaudible) and we say no, you know, General Motors felt it, millions of dollars they lost. Well you know since then corporate America now has — you know, they understand our culture very well because we are the best consumers. My God, we're number one who's for AT&T, we make the longer phone calls. Why? Because we care about family values. (In Spanish) You know, regardless of what it costs so there are differences.

The point that you bring that I think that is important is how is it that the Anglo culture is just interpreting our research and our work and how a lot of times they will dismiss it and they'll say — you know, use it as a stereotype and we must hunker down and say no, you cannot — that's not true. You know, just because we collectively like to work as groups we don't think as individuals but that doesn't mean that we're not individuals. There's a big difference.

Ms. Guadalupe: Do you have a question?

Audience: Well, a comment. My name is Louie Valenzuela and I'm from Los Angeles and I'd just like to share with you some interesting statistics in LA County and Los Angeles City where we're really making great strides.

One of the five board of supervisors for the County of Los Angeles, as we all know is a woman, Gloria Molina, at the congressional level of the four Latino congressman — or members of congress, one who is a Latina, on the school board which the school board I believe is the second largest to New York City, of the seven members two of them are Latina women and of the six assembly — members of the state assembly — four of those are women and that's just — this is happening within the last 18 months. So at least in Los Angeles women are making great strides.

Ms. Guadalupe: I wanted to kind of bring it to the new administration now. Do you feel, Congressman Serrano, and maybe some of the people in the audience have some feelings on that, that with a new administration that some of the Latina agenda, quote unquote, will be able to be more — pushed in more a little bit that he's paying attention to the Hispanic community and do you feel that you have to go to him with one particular opinion so that he doesn't think that we're all divided and know what we're talking about.

Mr. Serrano: Well that was going to be my comment that my role as chairman of the caucus is to make sure that Lucille and Nydia Velazquez and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen have full input our final product and then I would rather present the product as a part of the caucus. I don't think it serves my purpose to present a Puerto Rican agenda to the President or a Mexican agenda or a Cuban agenda or a male versus the female agenda. So what I try to do is make sure that what we present is something we've discussed and taken a stand on those issues where there might be special input necessary. As I said to those of you that came to the dinner — there was a video tape we played — and I said that we were on the table discussing issues as special input that comes from the fact that we have three women in the caucus. But once the product is put together I think it's stronger if it goes together as a group, this is our position, you know, and then some of course don't have — don't call for special input.

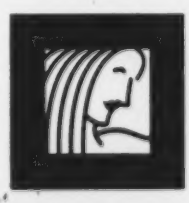
We are the most homophobic community that there is if you ask me and in that sense certainly the issue of sexual preferences and homosexuality is one that we need to discuss in our community.

There was one 936 position that was not a Mexican position or Puerto Rican or women or female, whatever. On those issues that are very much related to specific gender, such as, you know, family planning or reproduction or reproductive rights of someone I make sure that those concerned are put together with full input and the full impact of the three women and then we bring them forward.

I tell you we sometimes run more into the party label and the liberal versus conservative or middle of the road issue than any other issue in the caucus. In other words we have a crime bill coming that Janet Reno just asked the caucus to support and I'm glad it wasn't a debate because there were people who wouldn't support it as is, others who are more concerned about other things who oppose it or have concerns about what you do and how you treat people who are accused of a crime. And I am in the usual dilemma and that is that I may support everything in the crime bill vessel and in the bill but as long as it carries the death penalty I can't support it.

So those issues at times create a bigger problem for us than some of the others because one of the rules at least for us of politics is that for Nydia, Lucille or Ileana to get here they had to jump through some of the same hoops that we have to jump through. So there is an automatic respect for the person who is sitting next to you.

In Nydia's case it is special for me because we're like brother and sister and, you know, I got here with her help and she got here later with my help and it was a coalition with Dave Dinkins and Jesse Jackson — it's a whole history behind it so it's easy for me just to say "Welcome, sit down, and let's talk about something." But I find that the bigger problem of the caucus is interestingly enough — or thank God not the one we're discussing



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here but the fact that I came in one day and said "Boy, this death penalty is not the nicest thing only to find out that I was wrong and there was another member of the caucus said "Burn them all," you know, and so that presents a problem.

...as an educator working in the field of multi-cultural education I see that sometimes the very research that we do that we hope will be used to the service of educating all children is used against us.

Ms. Guadalupe: Do you feel that the President is paying attention to you more now than when you had the experience of having a Republican in office? Does that play a role?

Mr. Serrano: Well it's interesting you're asking that question almost like a lawyer, you know. You know the answer to it because you hang out at so many press conferences we have outside the White House when we walk out and in my first three years I never went to the White House, you know. And yes, definitely the President — this administration has every intent — what the final result will be, you know, history will have to deal with but it is the intent to include people who have been left out in the past.

The problem he has, his administration has, is finding a ground — and I don't want to call it a middle ground — for their policies because it was easy running against Bush, he was to the right; then the world doesn't want anybody to be to the left. So somehow everybody is always looking for ground and I no longer demand that my candidates I support have to be totally to the left. What I do now is try to keep them from going to the right as we deal on an every day basis with all the issues that we have to deal with.

So they're trying. They definitely have made some very serious statements about women in general and about Latino women and women in the minority. I mean yesterday I came to this room and made an announcement about something we had done and when I walked out the door there was a Latino woman from the White House and there was a Latino — African American woman from the White House who are empowered to deal with me on whatever it is that would satisfy my concern over that bill. Now these were not messengers, they were not lowly staff members, they were people in power to say "What do you want, what do you need," and if I had said I wanted something, if I could have an agenda to say I want something they were empowered to say it's done.

And so this is a different attitude that I'm seeing. I mean the Supreme Court appointment of a woman. I really don't believe that a Supreme — I really believe that a Supreme Court appointment of a Hispanic is not far away in this administration. And let's hope when that comes we can all agree on a candidate instead of what happened last time when we beat up our own candidate and lost out. And I see more appointments coming and you see it with the Janet Reno appointment which is not a Latino appointment but it's certainly an appointment again that made a person —make a presentation 80 percent of which was about taking care of people so that they don't end up in jail.

I suspect that if there had been someone else that they would have spent an hour listening to how many years you should do for your first offense.

Ms. Guadalupe: Then you don't feel that taking your agenda to the White House of one group is going to give the impression to the President and the non-Hispanic community that we all think the same?

Mr. Serrano: No, I — well we have to all think the same in the caucus as a final result. That's what you elected us to do. You did not elect me to bring three different agendas. On those issues as you well know that I know there is bitter disagreement I as chairman try for now on a day-to-day basis not to confront them. I have not confronted the Cuban embargo; what status Puerto Rico should have other than self determination, right; or NAFTA right now.

Now NAFTA is less emotional than the other two but it divides. Now sometimes I'm beginning to quote in my future book — sometimes being a good leader is not leading and not forcing people to make a decision that's going to break them in a way that they cannot do.

Audience: Yes. Dr. Paula Cruz Takush, UC San Diego. I wanted to say as perhaps from my pampered vision in the corridors of academia that as a researcher that does get out and get out the vote and et cetera, participate in all kinds of community activities, that I wanted to make a couple of comments. One in terms of the Clinton administration. I think that we are all happy that Clinton and others — the higher ups — come to our functions. Clinton was there at the dinner that this group held last week during Hispanic week and he was there at the opening of Latino USA, the new radio program on NPR for the Latinos.

But I think that when we look at appointments I am still disappointed. There may have been a Latina and a black woman in the corridors when you came out but I would like to see many more of those women and men from our populations.

Mr. Serrano: Yeah, but let me answer that because there's a problem. And again one of the things that I do that some people may be uncomfortable with is that I let out dirty laundry. It will be written that this President already — and this is not in defense of the administration — has attempted to make quite a number of appointments that fell through the cracks because we in the Latino community attacked those appointments. Number one, Jose Cabranes a Puerto Rican, was ranked very high to be a Supreme Court nominee and he was attacked from within the Hispanic community as being too moderate or conservative and we lost that. In New York three Puerto Ricans, three that I know of, were in line for positions in the White House and they were attacked by other Puerto Ricans who felt they were on the wrong side of the political club or whatever and they were attacked and we lost them. Okay?

Now no one is going to write that because no one wants to write that or create a scene about it. But

somewhere down the line the perception may build as you present now that the appointments are not there. Well, no, they're not there the way they should be and yes, we are concerned and we haven't stopped talking to the administration about appointments.

But at the same time it might be that we did lose a chance at a Supreme Court appointment this time or next time — and I know for sure we lost three Puerto Ricans from the northeast and we have another Puerto Rican now from the northeast up for a position and phone calls have already started to come in. In other words sometimes the enemy is not outside this room or whatever room we're in.

Audience: That's right.

Mr. Serrano: And that is a problem and there is — you know, well I'm jealous of her. That happens just as much as I am jealous of him, you know, and we have to deal with that. So when we say appointments we also have to know that there is some stuff we don't know that's going on.

We could have right now — I counted last week — about eight more appointments. And from the northeast which is complaining that the Hispanic appointments are not Puerto Rican but that they are Mexican — right? Well it could have been five of those appointed.

Dr. Paula Cruz Takash: If I could comment upon that point. The reason why — and I truly appreciate your comment about not requiring any more candidates to be left of left or left of center and just trying to hang on and see if they're not too far right, and I think that those are the kinds of constraints that we when we're thinking about how to penetrate electoral office — these are the major concerns that many of us have. The reason why I studied Latina elected officials and Latinos — we hope to extend the study for Latino elected officials as well — is not in order to merely chart our access to these institutions of power but rather in order to see if in fact we can bring about fundamental changes. Because as Ms. — has pointed out — and there were other people who seemed to support this — this is what is it all about if it is not to make fundamental changes in the economic, the social and political relationships in this country. And that is why I think these kinds of — that we need to do this kind of work.

I wanted to make one last comment and that was that I don't feel that our male (Spanish) need to feel threatened or need to feel embarrassed when we talk about the gender differences between Latinos and Latinas. I think that what has been demonstrated both in our own lives but also by research. There's an important book that has come out by a woman named Carol Hardy Fonta (phonetic) on Latino politics and Latino politics in Boston and pointing out all these gender issues that women not only in the electoral arena at all but also in our community are more connected to people in the communities.

But what she also points out is that there are men — there are men that operate in the way that women operate, that they do not forget their grass roots constituents, et cetera. If I was a man this is the kind of male representative, male person, author, husband, son, that I would try to be, one of these kinds of men. It does not mean that all men, 100-percent of the men — in fact only favor politics as electoral politics. There are men who are also imbedded in their communities.

And so again I would say that reinforced research and our personal knowledge in our communities that these are the kinds of role models I would imagine that men — my friends — want to see.

Ms. Guadalupe: Any comment, Dr. Ros Lehtinen?

Dr. Ros-Lehtinen: Yeah, I just wanted to, you know, offer for the issue of maybe tomorrow when we talk about coalition and building that, you know, there's some things we got to talk among ourselves as Latinas and as women and men and that is the issue of devisivness among, you know, the Latino groups and this issue is very clear in the administration and I — you know, I'm for one to get calls all the time about putting names and I've worked with the committee now here who is making the appointments. One of the concerns is that's not that we're hearing names it's that we're getting groups of the cream de la Latinos and the (Spanish) and Puerto Ricans fighting among the two positions and so I think we need to come to a consensus about, you know, how do we support each others and we have to have a set of principles about that and we need to look at what we do to each other too and I think that needs to be discussed tomorrow as we talk about this coalition rebuilding and not only among Latinos, among even the blacks since you're going to have the blacks there at the table tomorrow. And that is going to be very important that we look at how we do that in terms of principles because I got to tell you something, I do want to see more Puerto Rican appointments, you know. Okay, I'm from the northeast, I'm the number one. I sit in the National Council —and I'm the only Puerto Rican in that ward and I support Latino issues, I'm a Latina. But you know, sir, I want to see also the women, I want to be able to see, you know, women and men from all of the sectors of the Latino community.

So I think it's important that, you know, from whatever position you are I don't look at that issue because you can't just be nominated by, you know, or controlled by just one group.

...one of the rules at least for us of politics is that for Nydia, Lucille or Ileana to get here they had to jump through some of the same hoops that we have to jump through. So there is an automatic respect for the person who is sitting next to you.

Mr. Serrano: And very briefly don't change the agenda for tomorrow. What we're with the black caucus here is very important, it's a dream for anyone.

Just to give you an example, right now there are two men who are out for the position of heading the National Guard. That's an incredible position of power and the appointment hasn't been made

because there are two Hispanic men involved and a non-Hispanic man involved and if the division keeps going the way it's going I assure you that the non Hispanic will be — when the other two Hispanic men are both extremely qualified to head the National Guard which is a very important position.

And last but not least we could have had in this country an under secretary of state for Latin American Affairs, a Cuban American. There was a Cuban American community in Miami that killed that nomination and we didn't get a Latino, we got someone else.

Now five years from now some anti-Democrat or Clinton or whatever will write Clinton didn't have the intelligence to appoint a Latino to head the western hemisphere — blah, blah, blah — but he did. It was on the table, it was done, and it was killed.

Ms. Guadalupe: What about one last comment from the audience before we go to final thoughts.

Audience: My name is Jose Claudes (phonetic) and I'm from Toledo, Ohio.

I think we're kind of coming toward the end of the afternoon session and we've been focusing today on getting Latinos elected to office and I endorse it 100 percent and I'm not distracting from it.

However I think we should at the same time recruit and encourage Latinas to become appointed on local boards, be it governmental or if it rather be social service boards, people don't realize how much power these boards have not only to interpret the rules and regulations but to deliver the services. And I think that if we get so focused on getting people elected but we ignore this we're only doing half the job because I think it's no good to write the law if you don't have somebody there to interpret it, to implement it and to make certain that we get our fair share of it.

The reason why I studied Latina elected officials and Latinos — we hope to extend the study for Latino elected officials as well — is not in order to merely chart our access to these institutions of power but rather in order to see if in fact we can bring about fundamental changes.

And if I can just for one quick minute — if I can relay the story, before I became a state judge I was a municipal judge and at that time we only had one licensed Hispanic-speaking psychologist in Toledo, believe it or not. And her specialty was adolescent psychology and she was working at a local mental health center. And I had an adult in front of me who spoke very little if any English and he needed psychological counseling. But no one around could speak Spanish. Well, I thought of Martha and I called up Martha and I asked her would she be willing to give this man counseling even though it wasn't her area of specialty and she said, yes, I would love to but I know my boss won't let me.

I said "What do you mean?" She said, "Oh, here we have a very firm rule you only work within your specialty," and I said "Would you mind if I talked to your boss?"

Now remember I'm a judge and it doesn't give me all the power in the world but it gives me a little bit of leverage, okay? So I called her immediate boss and she said, "No, Martha is adolescent psychologist and we won't let her work with adults." I said, "Would you mind if I talked to the executive director," and she said "No, go ahead, I know he's going to back me up."

Sure enough I talked to the executive director and he backed her up. The end result is Martha did not counsel this individual.

Would you believe it, lo and behold about a month later just by chance I got called and I was asked to serve on that board. I said yes.

Would you believe about a month after that the same need arose. This time I called up not as a judge — remember they shot me down as a judge — I called up as a fellow board member one twelfth the boss of that director, "Oh, yeah, Judge, sure, anytime, I'll send Martha over."

Now see it wasn't because I was a judge, it wasn't because I was an elected official, it was simply because I was one twelfth of that person's boss and they did not turn me down at that time and I got the services for this individual that I would not have gotten even if I was the mayor of the City of Toledo I dare say I would not have gotten it.

So we can't forget to get involved on the local things, the non-elective things, as well as what we're looking for here.

Ms. Guadalupe: Do you have any final comments Dr. Santiago?

Dr. Santiago: I want to — first of all I agree with him, I think we need to — number one, I think women need to run for all positions, not only for just elected positions but for appointment positions, you are correct in saying that there's a lot of power that hasn't — even, you know, college boards and I just think that it's so important that we are represented at all levels so I want to tell you that. I do agree with you wholeheartedly.

The other thing is I do have my book here, it's $22.00 and I take checks or cash — and I will personally sign it if you're interested.

But I want to thank you. I think that this is important and I want to say to the congressional caucus I hope that you will have this every year. It's been a great summit for us and so I want to ask you to continue to have these dialogues and the next time we bring the women who are in congress so that we can have a much better dialogue.

Ms. Guadalupe: Do you have any final thoughts, Dr. Sierra?

Dr. Sierra: Again, I just want to underscore what an exciting moment we are in in terms of our community. The possibilities are simply endless and it is certainly exciting in terms of really seeing how we in all of our talents and resources and creativity can bring to bear social change for this country and hopefully even beyond.

And I think even though it doesn't appear that we as academics do very much in that I would like to sug-

gest that we are all in this together and certainly it seems to me we have a very very bright future if we do indeed seize these possibilities.

I think we also have a very sober understanding of what oppression means, of what inequality means and what struggle means. And whether we are in a legislative arena or in a university community or a grass roots activist community I think therein lies our strength. It is indeed a commonality of experience at a very important fundamental level and I just want to thank the congressional Hispanic caucuses, to the staff and the congressional Hispanic caucus members for putting on the agenda for discussion the issue of women, Latina women, for the cause.

Mr. Serrano: Thank you. First of all I appreciate your comments, both of you, on this workshop and this conference. This is a dream of mine and one of the platforms which I ran on for chairman of the caucus, that I would build a coalition with the blacks, that we would make the caucus be more of a legislative group and we are doing that, that we would break the caucus into task forces to deal with specific issues and that we would create an issues conference.

A report will come out of here with a series of suggestions about how to deal with certain public policy and we will keep in touch with all of you throughout the year.

Hopefully tomorrow will be also a success and we will be getting ready to plan for the rest of the work that has to be done for next years conference.

I would like to end my closing statement with the part I know best and feel strongest about, elected office.

There is a need for women to be involved in all levels of the society but there is one — I go back to my initial statement — where you already have a major and strong serious base that you can mobilize to build on, and that is that for good or for bad, for insult or for respect, for relegating or for participation you have been running the local political structure in our community.

You perhaps have not been making the decisions but you have been doing the work. Now is the time in a diplomatic way, which I always force everybody to adhere to because I do, to begin the negotiations to have the women step into the role of being candidates of those organizations you have been the soldiers of for so long, to pick the most qualified and to pick the ones who have been around a long time, or a short time very active.

And where you find women like the one you mentioned who could not speak well or whatever but had power, let them be the ones who counsel on where is that woman in the community, be it a teacher, be it a lawyer, be it a housewife that the kids grew up now and who is ready to run for that local office and begin to build on it.

I'm not only a product of a woman as I mentioned before, but I'm also a product of two very strong women in the South Bronx, one named Maria Lopez, who headed the poverty programs in the South Bronx, and one named Arilena Tonenti (phonetic), who made me what I am today by allowing me to grow along side of them. Arilena Tonenti once said something to me which shocked me in the 1960s, shocked me and then later I understood that there was nothing to be shocked about. I always thought that she was the strongest human being I knew. She walked into a room and men and women stood up at attention and she spoke and she came in and she headed a group called United Bronx Parents and she built the first coalition with blacks in New York City and the mayor called her every week and she was a powerhouse. Very liberal, she had all the students from every radical group in New York City, young black men hanging around with her and she would counsel them on a daily basis.

However I think we should at the same time recruit and encourage Latinas to become appointed on local boards, be it governmental or if it rather be social service boards, people don't realize how much power these boards have not only to interpret the rules and regulations but to deliver the services.

And one thing when I was starting out I started to raise my hand at a school board meeting to say something and she started to raise her hand and at that minute I immediately grabbed my other hand and slapped my hand so I wouldn't dare pick up my hand before her. She said something that would be totally unacceptable if you think about it. She said "Go ahead." And I said, "No, no, you go first." She said, "You and my men always go first." I was in shock.

How can this, the most liberated woman I know say "My men always go first." Well it was because she was so much in control that she knew exactly what she was doing with me. And the following year when there was an election and an opening for the assembly there was a male named — Floris (phonetic) and there was Arilena Tonenti, and both were supposed to go into a room and decide who was going to run for the assembly and she said to Floris (phonetic) "I'm not running and I don't think you should, I think Joe should run." And after I passed out for about ten minutes and got up I ran for the assembly and got elected and the rest is history.

Plenary Session on Coalition Building

Moderator:
Charles Ericksen

Congressional Members:

Congressman
Xavier Becerra

Congressman
José Serrano

Congressman Kweisi Mfume

Saturday, October 2 **PROCEEDINGS**

10:00 am - 12:30 pm Rayburn House Office Building

Mr. Ericksen: We are ready to go. Thank you very much for showing up on a Saturday morning for what is probably the key session that I feel we're going to have, which talks about coalition building between —political coalition building, really is the main focus, between Black and Hispanic leaders throughout the nation, and specifically here in Congress.

We are going to get started right now because you were kind enough to get here on time, and we have a delay in a couple of the other people that we expect to speak, but we have two of the most powerful and respected members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus here to kick things off.

We want to have a lot of interaction with the audience, and do welcome your questions. When you want to ask a question, please come up to the mike, or — we know some questions are going to be statements more than questions, but that's fine, because we have so many distinguished people in the audience, as I've learned at some of the other sessions.

> Someone could say that the immigration issue is our issue, but there are Haitians now who are being treated in a way no one should be treated, and they consider that their issue.

But we ask you to sign in. There will be somebody to get your name, so that this can go for the record, we spell your name right; and secondly, so that we can — other people will know who you are, and recognize your own background and expertise, to give added emphasis to what you say also.

I would like to introduce the two members at the head table. First of all, a gentlemen, who I'm sure you've seen a lot of during these last few days, Congressman José Serrano from New York.

And the second congressman is a fellow Californian — I'm a Californian also —Xavier Becerra, who made a — who made a tremendous impact when he was a California legislator, and has come in here running from the day he arrived, and has already impressed so many people here in Washington with both his knowledge and ability to make things happen.

So with that, we will start first with brief statements from the two congressmen, and then we'll get into it.

Mr. Serrano: Thank you very much.

I think it is proper that the two Hispanic faces you see immediately in front of you are Xavier and I, for two reasons, and let me first preface my comments by saying that part of what we have to accomplish amongst ourselves — and, you know, 99.9 percent of the people that are in this room are Latinos — what we have to accomplish amongst ourselves is to decide whether indeed we're going to put past experiences, fears, trepidations, concerns behind us, and move ahead. It's almost proper that the door is closed because it might be the kind of decision that some people would say have to be made behind closed doors. Are we capable of moving on from where we've been in the past in terms of our relationship with the Black political community, and the Black leadership?

And it's, I think, proper that these are the two faces in front of you, because I've been around here a little over three years, and Xavier has been here a little over nine months, and we come from parts of the country where there are large numbers of Hispanics and Blacks, who at times find themselves living together, and at times have found themselves in conflict, and at other times have found themselves in coalition.

Xavier also represents that new wave of freshmen who is willing to knock down whatever wall has to be knocked down to reach our objectives, which is to better service and better represent our community.

So I think that the first thing we have to do is to really begin to openly discuss just how ready we are to deal with some issues that we have not dealt with in the past, or that still linger with us. For instance, when I suggested to people at the beginning of my — when I first decided to run for Chairman of the Caucus, I said, "Here's my platform. We're going to have an issues conference, and we will jointly hold with the Institute. We're going to break the caucus down into task forces, like the Education and Employment Task Force that Xavier heads, to deal with specific issues. We're going to try to make ourselves more of a legislative body. We're going to" — and this one was one of the two controversial ones —"We're going to try to have the national Hispanic community see the Congressional Hispanic Caucus as the Hispanic leadership organization in the nation. And we're going to try to build a working ongoing coalition with the Black caucus."

Well, I have to be honest, that that created some nervousness on the part of some members who had been around a while, who had experiences, and their experience and their comment immediately was the one that many of you could immediately recite if I asked you each to stand up: "Well, we united in the past, and they used us, and we got nothing out of it. How do you, Serrano, protect the caucus from that?"

But then on the other hand, when — please under-

stand that one of the reasons I proposed we do that was because I knew the two candidates who were running for chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, Mr. Mfume and Mr. Washington, and I had spoken to them over a period of time, and knew that they were also interested in accomplishing this, but they were going to face another kind of hesitation. The hesitation was: those folks are growing in such numbers that if we coalesce, are we going to be equal partners, or are we going to be eaten up in two or three years? Legitimate concerns on both sides.

Now, for a New Yorker — and again, this came into play — it was easier for me to make the statements I was making because for good or for bad, Puerto Ricans have lived next to Blacks, African-Americans, in most of your tenements and housing projects in New York City since our arrival in New York City. It was a shock to me to find out that there were Mexican-Americans who hadn't lived near a Black person all of their lives, and it was a total shock to me to find out that there were Black Americans who hadn't lived near a Mexican or a Hispanic at all, all of their lives. All you had to do on the third floor of Millbrook projects was go down the hallway.

That's all you did. And at Christmas time, you know, depending on which side of the hallway you were on, you would go from, you know, smelling the beans and — to smelling the collard greens and everything, and you know, and it was — and that mixture was there. But there have been people who have been playing on the fears. For instance, one of the comments I always make, which always fascinates me even when I'm making the comment, is: have we noticed that in New York City you can count on this hand how many African-Americans speak Spanish, yet Spanish has been available to them throughout their whole lives, but they've been led to believe that learning to speak Spanish was giving strength to that other group, promoting their language. In fact, they were even used by some very powerful people in New York City in the 1960's and early '70's to question Bilingual-Ed. as a tool of employment and a way of being defeated in a joint community.

They're the victims, when you analyze it, of that particular issue, because Black New Yorkers could be bilingual, and are not bilingual because they were told that that would be selling out to the other group.

We in many ways have been influenced culturally more by them than they have by us because of music and the arts, and the strong influence that they have in our communities. And in some ways those kinds of coalitions have actually gone backwards. If you remember the Palladium days in New York City, and that first strength of Afro-Cuban music, and Latin jazz and so on, the togetherness of people in the dance hall and in the school system around the music, if around nothing else, was very close. Now, more and more, there has been a separation of that.

So there is a history of having worked together. There is, in my opinion, an easier understanding of each other, but there has always been the fear of how we're going to do each other in. And I would submit to you that the fear has not all been presented by us, that the fear has been presented also by people who find themselves in an advantageous situation if we never unite. On many occasions, assembly districts and state senate districts in New York, which had reached that point where a minority could represent, continued not to be represented by a minority because there would always be one white candidate, a Hispanic candidate, and a Black candidate. We know that all the time.

It was a shock to me to find out that there were Mexican-Americans who hadn't lived near a Black person all of their lives, and it was a total shock to me to find out that there were Black Americans who hadn't lived near a Mexican or a Hispanic at all, all of their lives.

But we also know, no matter how much we like to deny it, is that it is very difficult to come up with more than three or four issues where we don't share the same dream, the same aspiration. Very hard to find. Someone could say that the immigration issue is our issue, but there are Haitians now who are being treated in a way no one should be treated, and they consider that their issue. We will consider it our issue too. And there is the whole influx and the whole question of what will happen in Africa, and what effect that will have — what will happen in Africa politically, and what effect that will have on immigration into the US. And believe me, when people who oppose immigration speak out, we better understand that they're not singling them out, or they're not singling us out. They're singling both of us out.

One of the points about how people look at us together is the point I make about Mayor Dinkins' reelection. I tell people that if you talk about coalition building, your best shot at electing a Puerto Rican mayor, or a Latino mayor in New York City, your best shot is to reelect David Dinkins. And people say, "I don't understand that." I say, "Well, if he loses, and the white media says he failed, they're not going to say, "The Blacks failed when they had an opportunity to govern." They will say, "Minorities fail when they have an opportunity to govern." We may sit around saying, "They fail," and they may think that we're waiting in the wings, but it is not in our best interest that he fails. Now, I know that that is a political statement, but that's also a social-political statement about what's going on.

Also, I tell people, "Think. If he fails, and less than 50 percent of us supported him, then how the heck are we going to take Guillermo Linares or someone else in 1997, and say, "This is our candidate."" Those folks are going to say, "Excuse me, didn't you do us in in '93?" And the media in New York continues to say, sends a message that says, "White folks ain't supposed to vote for Dinkins." Ah. But Latinos may abandon him. Now understand that. They don't use the phrase, "Whites have abandoned him." They never say — it's almost like, "That's okay." But heaven forbid a Latino doesn't vote.

So every Black African-American who reads the

newspapers in New York is already instructed on the following: "We don't expect Whites to vote for us; therefore, that's okay. But if we don't get half or more than half the Latino vote, then they didn't help us out." And that will create an incredible situation.

Now, very briefly, to finalize my opening statement, we have to understand, and we in the caucus are trying to understand, that perhaps what we have to do is do something which is very dangerous for politicians at this time to do, and that's to put something forth in spite of how people may feel in our constituencies. In other words, to show the way, because we have an experience that maybe some folks in the community don't have. In the community maybe people think they could have power together. Maybe they don't think they could have power. They're not sure.

We know what happened when two caucuses went into the leadership of the House, and said, "We're not voting for the budget bill if it has this cut, that cut, that cut, and that cut." And the leadership said, "Then tell us where the cut should be, and how the cut should be." And then the bill came out. And when the Black Caucus joined the Hispanic Caucus, and joined the three Puerto Rican members of Congress in saying, "We cannot vote for the package when it comes back if it cuts out all of 936, or it cuts out 936 to the disapproval of the governor and the industrial community in Puerto Rico, and the leadership in New York, and in Chicago, and in Philadelphia, and other places," well, when they got the message also from the Black Caucus, the White House immediately decided to do something about it.

...the coalition has to be built, in my opinion, on a decision to agree to disagree, to agree to work together when we can...

And two days ago, in the article you read today, when Xavier was able to accomplish what he accomplished along with the caucus, part of it was that we had stated that we could get the Black support on this issue.

So my point is that whatever fears, concerns you personally, or our communities may have about this coalition, we have no choice, and the coalition has to be built, in my opinion, on a decision to agree to disagree, to agree to work together when we can, not to make it a permanent thing. By that I mean, it cannot be that now we've turned the organizations into the Latino and Black Caucus. We've had experiences with that that brings politics into it to a way that it maybe doesn't work. But that we can come together on normal issues.

With one last thought in mind, geographically speaking, more and more of the cities of this country are being left, or have been left already, to our two communities, and future of America's cities may in fact be in the hands of our two communities. At the expense of sounding melodramatic, when you put a Black child and a Latino child in the sandbox, there's never a problem. The problem may be later on, but there's no problem. And when you nudge a Black person or a Latino person on, they'll tell you that the animosity or the fear or whatever is really not deep-rooted. And in some cases, it can't be deep-rooted because it's confusing. After all, every Puerto Rican member of Congress technically qualifies to be a member of the Black Congressional Caucus, maybe not personally, but certainly as a community. As we all say, (Spanish phrase), "Where's your grandmother?"

...let us begin to try to do away with that past experience and look ahead to the common ground that we can reach...

Okay. Now, there are communities — and we have to deal with this — of Hispanics, whose mixture, if you will — and I hate the phrase "blood mixture" —is native to the Incas and the Mayas and so on, and native to Spain. That's the mixture. But there are others of us with a mixture as heavily African, heavily African, and it's evident, and we sometimes deny that, and we can't. And so I tell Mfume that many members of the Black Caucus, I guess, don't qualify to be members of the Hispanic Caucus, but I know that at least the Puerto Rican members of the caucus, and the Cuban members of the caucus qualify very strongly.

And so my point is, let us begin to try to do away with that past experience and look ahead to the common ground that we can reach, and the fact that there are agenda items, and it doesn't have to be a love fest — although when you work together you begin to learn to love each other — it's not a love fest. It's the idea of coming together.

Now, for me it's easier for one reason. I don't know how it happened, but the Chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and the Chairman of the Black Congressional Caucus were both born October 24th.

So those of you who are not here as medical doctors, but as people who deal with the stars, maybe there is something to it, because we get along so well, and we're the same way, you know, low-voiced, strong when we have to be, diplomatic, and the whole thing. And so that — I think there's an exciting possibility here, but you have to give us your support, because if we pull off coalitions, and you denounce them — understand that — or if you question them at the local level, or if you refuse to go along with some local meeting, or some local decision, then you can destroy anything that we're trying.

(Whereupon, Mr. Mfume entered the room.)

Mr. Mfume: Thank you. What a nice reception. Thank you. Thank you very much.

Mr. Serrano: Mr. Chairman, we were — I'm going to summarize in 30 seconds, really. We were talking — and Xavier's going to speak less, so you can catch your breath and get the tone — we were talking about the fact that there is a common agenda we can work on, that we're not talking about marrying our two groups. There's history that indicates that we have to take that

along very slowly. I spoke at the end about this interesting coincidence of you and I being born on the same day. That maybe — he's younger in years, but we're not going to talk about that. That really could destroy a coalition, you know.

And the fact that there are fears on both sides. You're more equipped to deal with the fears on your side, but certainly, our comments always will be: "Well, in the '60's and the '70's when we did unite, the "Black leadership," quote, unquote, took advantage of us." Well, one thing I didn't say is that some of those leaders on the local level are not around any more, and the leaders who are around now are people who see the need to come together.

Then I also commented on the fact that for the Hispanic Caucus the job is a little different than for the Black Caucus because there are people in our caucus whose heritage is European, Spanish, and native to the lands of the Incas and the Mayas, and other Indian communities, whereas there are at least three members of the caucus, three Puerto Ricans who technically qualify to be members of the Black Caucus by the African mix of the Caribbean. And that some folks, I found out, especially Mexican-Americans, have lived in communities where they haven't seen a Black from 20 miles, and vice versa, whereas, in New York, all you have to do is in the projects, you go down the hallway and a Puerto Rican will see a Black. And so there are different experiences. And then you came in and saved my life.

Mr. Ericksen: Before Congressman Becerra starts, let me formally introduce the third member of our panel, Kweisi Mfume. I think most of you may have figured out by now who he was when he came in and got that very nice applause.

And I think I also failed to introduce myself. I'm Charlie Ericksen. I founded Hispanic Link News Service here in Washington, with my wife, Sebastiana, and my two sons Carlos and Hector, some 13 years ago, and we're still surviving.

And with that, we will ask Congressman Becerra to make the second presentation. Thank you.

Mr. Becerra: Thank you, Charlie, and —thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'm going to be very, very brief because I believe Chairman Serrano said really what most of us would like to be able to say when we have a mike before us.

Let me just add one thing. This is, I believe, a watershed period for us as Latinos. It's a watershed period because, well, this is history in the making today and yesterday, that all of us are here as Latinos talking about the Latino agenda. It's often been the case that we're not here to talk, but to disagree, because whether you are Cubano, or Puerto Ricano or Chicano, or these days now including Central Americano, there were always areas where we could not agree. And it was even worse than that. It was Californiano against New Yorker, or someone from Yami (phonetic), and there was always a point of disagreement. And I must tell you, when it's in politics, the disagreement is much sharper because you're talking about dollars.

But we are coming together for the first time, and I think the chairman of our caucus deserves so much credit for thinking of coming together for the first time ever, rather than just having a dinner where we all socialize and eat, but we actually come together to discuss issues. We are here. This is a confluence of time, of issues, and of personalities, and this is a time for us to come to terms with who we are, and how we will work together as Latinos.

But, as Chairman Serrano also said, oftentimes those who are in leadership positions must take that opportunity to go a step beyond, so that way the community will say, "We can do more." And the chairman, fortunately, with the agreement and collaboration with Chairman Mfume, decided to do this particular session. So we're moving beyond — even though we still may have disagreements on issues, we're moving on to discuss something that we see in the future, messia, (phonetic) and that makes this a very important event.

But this is a watershed period, and I'm glad that I will be able to say this particular remark with both chairmen sitting next to me, because this watershed period has many different paths, and I think all of us see them, and we want to be able to speak like family here, and discuss it, so we take the right path.

This is, I believe, a watershed period for us as Latinos.

But how many of us, as Chairman Serrano said, see the chance that we will not take the right path, and we will see a flash point, not just between Cubanos or Chicanos, but Latinos and African-Americans. And we cannot see the increasing number of Latinos giving us Latino muscle as a sign that African-American muscle is decreasing, and we cannot continue to say that a dollar is there, and that the African-American portion is "X" and the Latino portion is growing, and that "X" will be decreased because the Latino portion must increase. We cannot let that continue, because we don't want to fight over those crumbs of the pie. But the flash point is there, and we are here together, and we are fortunate to have two leaders of this nation here together so we can discuss it with them.

And I don't know if all of you, as you sit here, realize the immensity of what we're doing today, because we won't resolve the issues of the world or of the two communities, but we begin a dialog, and I guarantee you that next year when the African-American Caucus — the Black Caucus in Congress, and the Latino Caucus, the Hispanic Caucus in Congress, come together next year. I think it will be a natural sign, a natural tendency to discuss having this type of dialog again next year. And that's why this is watershed period.

And I hope all of you will ask questions or make comments, but I hope all of you will participate because we have two chairmen who have a vision, and two chairmen who have come together to discuss this, and I think it's an opportune time for us to be family, and openly discuss what we think is necessary to get us messia (phonetic). Thank you very much.

Mr. Mfume: Mr. Ericksen, thank you for your kind remarks. And, ladies and gentlemen, I apologize for being a little late. Mr. Mandela's in town this morn-

ing, preparing, as most of you know, to finish the process of trying to have sanctions against South Africa lifted, and last night at about 11 o'clock he decided he wanted to meet with me this morning at nine o'clock. So I drove over from Baltimore, and the meeting went a little longer than had been expected, but I indicated to him that I really had to get here, and he sends his best wishes, Jose, to you, and to members of the Hispanic Caucus, and to all who are in attendance.

It is important in my estimation that we recognize in our generation why our generation is important, what the previous generation gave to us, and what we must give to others.

Allow me, upon a personal privilege, if I might before I begin, to express my sincere appreciation and my gratitude to both Jose and Xavier for the work that they have done on the Hill, and for the opportunities that we have had to work together.

Xavier Becerra, as you know — or maybe you don't know — has, along with Jose and other members of the Hispanic Caucus, really distinguished himself this year in a number of ways on the floor of the House, not the least of which has been the battle as it relates to illegal aliens and what many members in our party and on the other party have been trying to do in a punitive way to punish people because of their status in this country. It has been a rewarding fight, and one that we've won some battles on this year, and one that we look forward to continuing to fight for. And I think that's important, because of the way that he has represented the Latino community at large in that regard in such a very short time.

Jose is right, he and I are born on the same day, about 20 years apart —

October 24th —

Mr. Serrano: Yeah, but the Yankees are going to finish higher than the Orioles.

Mr. Mfume: You're right about that. You're right about that. We're big baseball fans too.

Jose is my friend. He is, obviously, your chairman, but he is someone that we hold in great esteem in the Congress because he is one of the ablest legislators that this nation has produced, Latino, Black, White, regardless, and it is very important that I think he be afforded the opportunity to do things and to break new ground. That can only come by being supported by so many of you in this room and others. Jose and I talked last year about the importance of trying to build coalitions, and we were both thinking about running for our respective caucus chairmanships, and so we, on the floor one day, sat down and said, "Well, if you run, I'm going to run, and if we both win, here's what we want to do."

And we talked about trying to find a way to forge new ideas and paths, and to build a relationship that was meaningful, one that would set an example to all people, and one that would be lasting, so that is would be the predicate, if you will, the ground work, the foundation on which a lot of good things could be built. So it has been out of that kind of a background, and with the relationship that I have with Jose that I have been so pleased, as Chairman of the Black Caucus, to work hand in hand with members of the Hispanic Caucus, and in particular with your chairman.

Let me, if I might, say a couple of things, because like Xavier and Jose, I really want to hear from you. It is important in my estimation that we recognize in our generation why our generation is important, what the previous generation gave to us, and what we must give to others. Part of that giving is a realization of the fact that we must find ways to do new things, and to create new approaches to old problems, and in the process, create for our own generation, a foundation and a legacy that means something. Oftentimes it is easy, I think — and I say this with people who grew up with me — it's easy to look back at what others did and assume, "Well, I can try that same old approach, and it will work again." Those approaches were very valuable, because in many instances they yielded a great number of results. But really, if we're honest with ourselves, these new days and new times require new ideas and new bold approaches in dealing with them.

So this aspect of coalition building must go beyond where it was in the '60's and the '70's. It must really be a genuine reaching out, and a genuine understanding, I think, on both sides, that while there may be differences, the differences really are minutes, and once we're able to get beyond those, we will recognize that the similarities are vast, that there are so many, many ways in which we have the same fights, and we're concerned about the same problems, and that our destinies are tied hand in hand. It is out of that understanding that I have encouraged and continue to encourage members of the Congressional Black Caucus to look at the world with even a more wider and broader approach, and to recognize that this struggle that Mr. Mandela and I talked about today, is really a struggle of people, and that people of color across this hemisphere and throughout this world really do have a special kind of destiny that is tied together, but it can only be realized when we understand and appreciate the vastness of it, and

We need, as best as I can understand, and I believe this honestly, people in our generation and the next generation to have a third eye, that is, to look beyond what is obvious and to look at what is possible, and the possibilities are so enormous because of the country that we reside in at the moment.

get beyond sometimes the narrow views that it is so easy for all of us, including myself, to have. It is something that we have to get up every day and fight against.

I spent a lot of time in Puerto Rico, in the Republic Dominicana, in Mexico, in parts of South and Central America over the last 15 years or so. It was a unique experience for me because it taught me so much about people and so much about the world, and I would argue that those lessons are really applicable to what can be done here in Washington and throughout the country in terms of coalition building. It must be a genuine realization that, "A", we are all God's people; "B", in many respects we are fighting a common set of problems; and, "C", that it is so much easier to embrace one another and to work on those together, than it is to say, "This is mine, and this is yours," and to carve up little pieces of an ever shrinking pie, and assume that we've protected our turn, or we've got what was ours. That is really the wrong way to look at it, I think, and the wrong way to look at life.

We need, as best as I can understand, and I believe this honestly, people in our generation and the next generation to have a third eye, that is, to look beyond what is obvious and to look at what is possible, and the possibilities are so enormous because of the country that we reside in at the moment. It is almost a moment that is pregnant with opportunity, both in politics, and in economics, and in academics, and in social matters.

So when we talk about coalition, Jose and I don't do it in order to throw out a grand scheme or plan or an idea and run away from it. We work at it on a day in and day out basis. It is not an easy thing to do because people oftentimes want to go their various ways. But I think if we, through the simple eloquence of our example, do over and over and over again what we believe in, after a while it catches on.

Someone came to me in Indianapolis when I was addressing the NAACP, and said to me, "Thank you so much, in your speech today and in all of your other speeches, for mentioning the word "Latino."" He said, "Previously that has not been the case, and we don't oftentimes see that our struggles are the same." And I do it deliberately because we've got to find ways, not only to broaden our scope and our horizons, but to broaden our language and our semantics when we talk in such a way that we have a global appreciation of all that we are faced with, and all the things that make us so much alike.

So I have come here this morning out of the true belief that life is too short and friends are too few, not to take advantage of the simple and basic things that God has given us, not the least of which is a basic understanding of each other, our desires, our wants, the things that we care so much about, and to try every day that I get up and every night that I go to bed to be an example of that by reaching out. It is for me a special kind of reward. It yields to me far more than I could ever get by passing a bill or giving a speech, because it says to me that in spite of everything else, I have found a way to overcome, and to work toward what I know is the right thing to do, and that is to try to have one world with one group of people with one goal and one common horizon. If we all move toward that horizon, we will get there together, but if we, for whatever reason, assume that we will take an incremental step here, and that Group B will take an incremental step there, and look at this as "What's in it for me or what's in it for them," then we will never do that.

And I need to be very honest with you. It is not easy. I mean, all of you in this room know that it is not easy because there are so many prejudices out there in the world, so many stereotypes. Sometimes they are intentional; sometimes they're unintentional; sometimes they come about as a result of pressure in a group; sometimes as a result of our socialization in this country. Those kind of stereotypes and those kind of myths and beliefs have to just be chipped away at over and over and over again.

...we've got to find ways, not only to broaden our scope and our horizons, but to broaden our language and our semantics when we talk in such a way that we have a global appreciation of all that we are faced with, and all the things that make us so much alike.

So that's why this conference was important and why I wanted to be here. I do hope that I have an opportunity to hear from many of you. I again have to say it is a blessing to have people like Jose and Xavier and others, who are living examples of what they believe in, and who remind all of us, not just how far we have come, but how far we all must go together. Thank you very much.

Mr. Ericksen: Both chairmen made references to different — and I think it would help the audience develop for a frame of reference for individual questions — it would be useful if we got each of you to identify the differences that you see between the two caucuses. In other words, even in terms of size, geographic representation, political affiliation, and of course, critical issues. So I'm going to take the prerogative of being close to the mike, and ask that first question. Could we get responses on that? Thank you.

Mr. Mfume: If I could go first, I didn't mean to suggest that there were a great deal of differences between the caucuses, as much as I wanted to suggest that there are a great number of differences that sometimes exist, and I think get too much play in this country, between groups of individuals.

The language, we can start there. People assume — some — that English should be, ought to be, and forever shall be the only language that people speak. And I don't understand that. I don't understand the English First Movement, and things like that, and so I ask people, "Explain it to me, because it's a difference that I don't think has to exist." But there are those who see that as a difference, and argue that, "Well, we've got to have this,

and we can t tolerate that." I think we've got to be broad enough to tolerate both.

There are basic differences sometimes in our cultures, and people in this country who may look at my culture, or who may look at Jose's culture, and say, "That's different and that's different and that's different, and so that does not mean our norm, and so therefore, something is different about you." Well, I was always taught that diversity was great, and I'm so glad that God decided to make us all different, and give us different languages, and give us different cultures, because that's what really a world is about.

But those kind of differences, Mr. Ericksen, I think are played up by people who want to continue to keep us divided against one another, and they're forever shooting them at us individually and collectively.

I don't think there are a great deal of differences between the caucuses, other than the fact that Jose likes the Yankees and I like the Orioles.

Mr. Serrano: That's because he stole the Dodgers.

Mr. Mfume: Right.

The only differences that may come up on a piece of legislation are interpretations as to how in fact the long term effect may be. I think there are many more similarities between the caucuses, but I do know that there are differences that are perceived by the rest of the world, not Latino versus African-American, but Latino versus the general white population, or African-Americans versus the general white population. And then we're made to think that those differences are really our fault, like is something wrong with us, when it really is not at all. So that's what I mean when I alluded to that, and I hope I've added some clarity to it.

But those kind of differences, ... I think are played up by people who want to continue to keep us divided against one another, and they're forever shooting them at us individually and collectively.

Mr. Ericksen: Well, yeah, except I'm not dealing with political differences, as much as just so that people understand. How many members are there in each caucus, for example? Can we start with that?

Mr. Mfume: Okay. There are 40 members of the Congressional Black Caucus, 39 of whom serve in the House, 38 of whom are Democrats, and 37 of whom have voting privileges. So I have to remember those numbers, 40, 39, 38, and 37, but there are 40 members in total.

Mr. Serrano: And we have 20 members, of which 17 are Democrats. As I always joke, we have a Mexican Republican, which is not too strange, but we have a Cuban Democrat, which is very strange.

We also have 3 so-called —because I don't call them that — Delegates, who vote on amendments, but don't vote in the full House. We have — the biggest difficulty that I have chairing the caucus, and one thing we've been doing all the last three days, is being very open about things here, is that at times — but then it could be the usual of looking at the other side and saying, "Boy, you have it easier than I do." At times it would seem to me that you have more of an agreement on some general issues than I do, because I found — for instance, on the death penalty or on gun control, that there are some Mexicanos who like people, you know, people —everybody has to have a right to have their gun. And that's not a personal feeling. It's the region of the country that they come from. You know, Texans do think differently than New York City people about guns or about hunting or about the death penalty at times, especially if there's a law profession background.

...Texans do think differently than New York City people about guns or about hunting or about the death penalty at times, especially if there's a law profession background.

So at times I get the feeling that I just need that extra two hours to get a consensus, because on the major issues you've got 50 years of working on those issues.

But the differences within the caucuses do not transmit into differences at the top of the caucus. In other words, in between the two caucuses, sometimes I have a harder time trying to get a consensus in the caucus than I do reaching an agreement with the other caucus.

Mr. Mfume: Well, let me just let you know that you're not the Lone Ranger. It's equally as hard for me. It just looks like it's easier.

Mr. Serrano: See what I mean?

Mr. Mfume: You see us when we come out of the room, but the Congressional Black Caucus is more diverse than it's ever been. We've got people from rural areas. We've got people from the south, from the east, from the west. So it's harder to find unanimity. In fact, when I was running to become chairman I said, "The days of unanimity are over. If I can just get a consensus on every issue I will be happy." So that's what we try — and our meetings tend to take longer also as a result of it.

Mr. Becerra: If I can comment. Maybe it's my newness to the process. I've only been here nine months, but I'm going to be more blunt than I think our chairman has been.

I look at the Black Caucus, and I see a very potent force. I see a caucus, when it finishes a meeting — and I'm impressed always when I see these emergency meetings on the floor of the House, where you see these members come together like bees at a hive, and when they break, it's like they're coming out of a huddle like football players. They are ready to play. And I must tell you, that whether it's true or not, that's the impression. And when you see that, that's a steamroller looking right at you, and you don't want to confront it.

So when leadership saw that on the vote on the budget with this line item veto, and any other issue where the Black Caucus can have its chairman go to the Speaker and say, "Black Caucus doesn't like it," that speaker's looking at a big steamroller, and is saying, "Well, if the Black Caucus don't like it, we'd better go back and sit down and see what we can do."

Now, the Hispanic Caucus — and if you read the paper today — had a chance to do that, and we did it this past week, but that, I think, is really the first time I'm aware of — and I'm not talking about just my nine months here — that we really did that.

So let me tell you what I think are the differences between the two caucuses. 40 members gives you a lot more clout than 20 members. 37 voting members — how many?

Mr. Mfume: 37.

Mr. Becerra: 37 voting members gives you a lot more clout than 17 voting members. But I really believe that the Hispanic Caucus still has a long way to go to have the cohesion that is visible in the Black Caucus, as much as there are differences.

But I really believe at this stage — and again, I can be corrected — I think the differences in the Black Caucus are more, as Chairman Mfume said, regional. I don't think the Hispanic Caucus, I don't think those of us here can say that our differences are just regional. I don't know where you stand on Cuba, but I know I probably disagree with a number of you on it. I don't know where you stand on NAFTA, but I probably disagree with you on a number of it. I really believe that we still, as a community, have to get further along, and through our representatives, get further along to the point where we say we have cohesion.

Now, let me tell you where I think there are a couple of other differences in the caucuses, and again, I want to be very blunt, because I think it's very important that I be so, because I intend to have a good working relationship, not only with my own chairman, but with the chairman of the Black Caucus.

I think there's that possibility of tension, oftentimes because of region, not because of ethnicity or race, but because of region, but oftentimes, I think, because of ethnicity or race, because of the suspicions that have prevailed in the past, not necessarily between Kweisi Mfume, Jose Serrano, and Xavier Becerra. I mean, if you take a look at us, we're probably the only three members in the entire 435 House of Representatives that wear double-breasted suits virtually all the time, but — you know, we have several things in common. There are —

Voice: You just don't fit in then.

Mr. Ericksen: I don't know whether the microphone caught that remark or —

Mr. Becerra: We have — there is this grand possibility for collaboration, but I think it's getting rid of some of the suspicions. And here I will be deadly honest: I think, perhaps, the biggest obstacle to true spirited working relationships between the two caucuses comes from folks from my own specific community, the Mexican-American, the Chicano community, and that is because, I think, my older kin, my colleagues who were — and I don't mean to disparage anybody, but I think some of the members who are Mexicanos or Chicanos or Mexican-American are more suspicious because we didn't grow up in the same housing project, and we may have had the 20-mile distance between the two communities, and we don't see the need to work together, although, in south central Los Angeles, virtually half of the population is Latino. But see, one of the biggest problems in south central Los Angeles is that although half of the population is Latino, it's growing and growing in Central American population, and the Central Americans and the Chicanos, Mexican-Americans, still haven't coalesced.

So you see, I want to be deadly honest because I want so much to have a solid working relationship, not just with my Latino colleagues, but with my African-American brothers and sisters, because 60 is much more powerful than 40 or 20 —

And as you sit here today, don't expect that next year it will only be 60, but it will have increased by then.

So, I really believe that there is this river that takes us in the right direction. I, unfortunately, think that sometimes the current is seen a little bit differently from one side of the shore than the other, and that's all really it is, but we have to get to the point where, as I said at the beginning, the vision is the same. But there are differences, and we do need to work on them, but a lot of it really requires that the foundation in the two caucuses, especially the Hispanic Caucus, be solidified so that we feel strong about our own caucus, our own community, so we can then coalesce with others.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you. Thank all three of you.

We are — please come to the microphone, and I would ask, especially in the first half hour, to ask questions of the congressmen, rather than to present your own platforms, and — Because I know Congressman Serrano would have to leave in about half an hour, so do direct your questions to the congressmen as briefly as you can. Thank you.

Dr. Barrelo: Mine will come in the form of a statement. My name is Dr. Maria Barrelo from Oxnard, California, first Chicano elected trustee and chairperson this year in over 100 years. We have a population of 80 percent, and I had the privilege of meeting Congressman Becerra at one of his tours as he went through California.

I also serve on the Hispanic Advisory Council for

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the State Board of Education. And I want you to know that what you have done here is just incredible to me. One of the things that we have attempted as a tri-council, which includes an Asian Pacific group, the Afro-American and the Hispanic, is to do similarly what you have done here. It just warms my heart to see that from the top it's going to come down.

But there are differences, and we do need to work on them, but a lot of it really requires that the foundation in the two caucuses, especially the Hispanic Caucus, be solidified so that we feel strong about our own caucus, our own community, so we can then coalesce with others.

What I would like to ask, if this can be, please, put together in some kind of a summary report that I can take back and start in California.

Mr. Serrano: Everything that will happen —one of the things we wanted to do, speaking now about the conference, that was different, is that there will be video available, and there will be a summary, and some sort of a suggestion. What I didn't want this conference to be was just a discussion of problems. We're going to try, in a report that you will all get and that will be published, to come to some conclusions.

One of the reasons, incidentally, that all of the moderators are journalists was because journalists are trained to say, "You said that already three times. What's your answer to the problem?" Whereas other people always traditionally say, "Yeah, well, you can talk about it for half an hour."

So we've tried to do some different things that culminate with the tele-conference we're having right after this. Yes, there will be something.

Mr. Linares: My name is Guillermo Linares. I'm a council member in New York City. I want to commend both of you, not only for pulling together today for Latinos and African-American and for the nation, but also by demonstrating coming together to address issues, or impacting dimensions to both communities.

Whether it is South Africa, whether it is the question of democracy for Haiti, whether it is bilingual education or the issue of immigration, I think it's a question of the extent to which we are able to look at social and economic justice for people, especially when there are people of color in this country. And whether we have to look at the reelection of the first African-American elected as mayor in New York City, or we have to look at the election of the first of those waves of immigration that are coming in from Latin America and other parts of the world, the fact of the matter is that we have to look at how we can address those issues.

I think that the question to you is to what extent you and the leadership of this country at this very moment, when we see opportunities to really move forward with a progressive agenda for all, especially for all people who want to bring the right change, justice in the form that we feel will give opportunity to those who have not had in the past, to what extent you can channel that disposition to work together, particularly to those of us who are in local level, who need really to pull together to make that difference.

Sometimes we have issues that impact on African-Americans that Latinos need to come forward and be aggressive part of those struggles. If you can devise ways in which you can approach that at a local level, demonstrating African-American coming to the rescue, or coming to support, and Latinos coming to support African-American at a local level, I think that that will go a long, long way in really bridging and building the confidence that we know historically has been there. Our history has been denied to us, and that's the problem that we have. If you look at history, you see African-American, you see people of Africa, you see native Americans here in this continent, and you see people of goodwill really coming across, but that history has been taken away from us, has been really throw aside. We have to really forge that to bring justice, and the question is really: can you address it and approach it with that type of dimension to really build on what you have already begun here at this level?

Mr. Mfume: I don't think we have much choice. I think if we fail to do that, then conferences like this and efforts to reach out really don't matter after all. We really don't have any choice. I couldn't agree more that our histories have been changed, and altered, and oftentimes we've not seen the similarities because we have focused so much on just trying to be, quote, "good Americans."

It is that fact, coupled with a number of others, why we got to the point, as Xavier said, that we have these feelings of mistrust and distrust. Oftentimes I think we're distrusting and mistrusting the wrong people. We do that with each other, and then it's perpetrated further because we don't talk enough to each other. We know, we go off into our group, or someone else may go off into their group, and without dialog you really don't have an opportunity to exchange ideas, or thoughts, or suggestions, or criticisms. You just continue to harbor those same sort of mistrusts.

In terms of how we do that specifically on local levels, I go back to my first remark. I don't think we have much choice, whether it is New York, or Los Angeles, or anywhere else. Both Jose and myself, as chairmen of these caucuses, have to find ways to do that, but you in many instances have to be our eyes and our ears because we don't always know where we need to be, or what we need to be doing. We have ideas, but oftentimes you're on the ground and you see things differently and you see them clearer. That's the kind of guidance I think that both of us need on those kind of issues with respect to local governments.

Mr. Serrano: Very briefly, this may be one of the few issues where the movement and the leadership comes from the top. I'm a believer that revolutions and movements and changes come from the bottom, from the people themselves, and I argue that any time you try to come in from the outside and make a change,

as some people are trying to do in some parts of the Caribbean right now, it just won't work. It has to come from the bottom up.

This, however, may be one of those rare instances where how Mfume and I behave with other, how the two caucuses work together, because of the fact that it is the highest form of government in the land, people will begin to look at it and be guided by that examples, especially if we begin to legislate in ways that begins to set forth statements that people can follow. It might be certainly worth a try, but I think that there has been ground work done. It needs coming together and maybe way to lead this one is to lead it by example from here where people see it on a national issue — on a national level, big issues, and then they can work with it locally.

Mr. Ericksen: Congressmen Becerra, did you have a comment at this point?

Mr. Becerra: No.

Mr. Ericksen: Okay. Carmen?

Ms. Votaw: Carmen Delgado Votaw. I think it's very nice to see a troika of leadership bringing us together this morning, and I think that we can start thinking in a new way. Serrano, as a Puerto Rican, is my representative. Becerra, as a Hispanic, is my representative. Kweisi, as a Marylander like me, is also my representative. And I think it's going to be very good if we look at all that leadership again, and try to find ways in which we can relate to them.

A three-pronged question: how are you going to both empower the women within the caucuses, so that they can again be — parts of this new way of thinking and behaving, and how can you join exactly also with the Women's Caucus in the Congress, which is becoming very, very powerful, and I think will be a very good ally for your efforts in the future?

The second question is: how are you going to deal with those areas where the crumbs are very small in terms of appointments to administrations and appointments to different things; how are the Blacks going to support us when we want some appointments, or Hispanics going to help move the cause when Blacks are at stake? And it was very nice to see Mayor Dinkins offering support to — this morning. So that's a trend that we need to think of.

And then the third trend is: how are we as caucuses, Black and Hispanic, going to deal with the whole international scene? I think we have a unique possibility of playing important roles, not only in Central America, but in Africa and other places of the world, and I hope that the caucuses do take that on as a horizon that you can work toward.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you very much. Let's deal with empowering women first, and go quickly around the table here.

Mr. Serrano: Right. The women in the caucus — and we discussed this at the Women in Public Policy Caucus yesterday — are very much bringing to the caucus a very recent grass root approach, and their presence itself, their style, which takes a back seat to no one, is allowing a full participation on the issues. Lucille Roybal is a very strong-willed person, and so is Nydia Velazquez, and Ileana is the same way, in fact, so much so that they chose today to be at the site for the tele-conference. In other words, Nydia will be in New York and Ileana will be in Florida. We'll see them on satellite. And Lucille will be in California. And they will be leading those three areas where maybe most of the 200 representatives in each of those sites will be men. I don't know. But it will be women in charge of those three sites, and bringing us the information necessary.

We know that we have to serve as a caucus, and if there has been — and I have not noticed it — a desire on the part of any member of our caucus not to empower women, it hasn't been evident. On the contrary, there was a lot of support for Nydia to get on the committee that she got, that she wanted, a lot of support for Lucille. And even though Ileana is a Republican, even though there are differences at times in that philosophy, it's always with a respect and an understanding of what her role is.

So I don't — I think what happens in caucuses — maybe I'm wrong, but my experience is that by the time you come here you have one thing in common. You know you — each member, regardless of what they look like, or whether they're men or women, or what the situation is, you've had to take so many shots, and pushed around so much, and negotiated and cajoled, and done everything possible, that you really do see yourselves as equals, because no one gets to this place by having been a wimp or by not being smart, or by not being hard-working, or by not being an organizer. And we respect that of each other.

Whether it is South Africa, whether it is the question of democracy for Haiti, whether it is bilingual education or the issue of immigration, I think it's a question of the extent to which we are able to look at social and economic justice for people, especially when there are people of color in this country.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you. Congressman Mfume.

Mr. Mfume: The women of the Black Caucus are empowered. In fact, they're like they're supercharged. Sometimes I remind them maybe they ought to just slow down a bit because they're ahead of their chairman. I'm a member of the Women's Caucus, Carmen, so I work in that — I'm an associate member.

So I work with that group, and you're right, it's becoming one of the larger caucuses. In fact, we really next time maybe ought to just have the chairman of the Women's Caucus as a part of this, 'cause that's the other part of this coalition that works so well with both of us.

But the first vice-chair of the Congressional Black Caucus is a woman. Our whip is a woman. The head of our Alert Task Force is a women. And women hold half of the task force chairmanships within the caucus, even though they're not half of the total enrollment in the caucus.

And I have to go back to Jose's point, if you've ever seen Nydia, and Lucille, and Ileana on the floor making a point, clearly, you know that they are empowered in such a way that oftentimes it's because of what they do that we get a broader sense of what we must do.

Or if you've seen Maxine Waters, or Cartus Collins, or Cynthia McKenney on the floor, then you understand why, particularly myself in the caucus —and I think many of our older members who come out of the background that you alluded to earlier about being part of the previous generation, have a new sensitivity about the importance of women in our organization, and the importance of their perspective, which is a perspective, quite frankly, that oftentimes gives us what we need to win. It is the winning margin.

I don't know if I can go beyond that, except to say that as I was thinking about Carmen's question, it really would be good the next time maybe to have the chairman of the Women's Caucus to be a part of this, because that caucus and the Progressive Caucus really comprise the four prongs of approaches that we oftentimes use on legislation. We may be written about or talked about separately, but it's what we do together that really makes the difference.

This, however, may be one of those rare instances where how Mfume and I behave with other, how the two caucuses work together, because of the fact that it is the highest form of government in the land, people will begin to look at it and be guided by that examples, especially if we begin to legislate in ways that begins to set forth statements that people can follow.

Mr. Serrano: Let me very briefly just touch on that because some people may say, "How come not other caucuses?" It was my decision that the first coalition that could be dealt with at this one was the obvious one, and that's one to cross lines, because Nydia and Lucille and Ileana are members of the Women's Caucus, but they're also Latinos. And there are Black members of the caucus who are members of the Women's Caucus. And it has always been my feeling that the focus of attention politically on whether they can ever get together is on these two groups here, and so this year this is the step we take, and maybe one of the goals is for next year to bring in more. At first, we had thought of doing coalition in general. Then we decided the panel would be 59,000 people long, and that politically, the fastest message that can be sent across this country, as is being sent in some of the local papers already, is the possibility of this coalition right now.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you. An interesting point, just quickly, of the three members of the Hispanic Caucus who are female, one is Cubano, one is Puerto Rican, and one is Chicano, which is really nice.

How many members are there in your caucus who are female?

Mr. Mfume: Nine.

Mr. Ericksen: Nine, okay.

Mr. Serrano: Let me try to be brief because I know we want to move on.

And at my own expense, and perhaps with all due respect to the two chairmen, I really believe once we see women become the chair, women are chairpeople, not only the caucus, but speakers of the House, and eventually, and I think soon, President of the United States, we will find a change in the direction of our policies, because I think there's no doubt — and I say this as a man who says it at jeopardy of being in elected office — that women have a much keener sense of what needs to be done to help people than men do. We've never been sensitized the way women have, and I think it's a shame, because ultimately, to our detriment as males, we will find that women will soon take over this world.

Mr. Becerra: — but I think the answer was poignant. The power and the utility of women in the caucus. The way we found out — the way my office found out that we were about to lose $320 million in this unemployment bill to help people who are unemployed and give it by taking money out of SSI —those are the aged, the blind and disabled, immigrants, lawful residents, the 320 million that was going to be taken from them, how I found out about that was from Nydia Velazquez's office, and then we proceeded from there. But had it not been that Nydia's office called, we could have never done anything. I could never have had those conversations with Mr. Gephardt and everyone else.

Mr. Serrano, the chairman, was with all of you at the time in these conferences on Thursday. He could not be located. The caucus staff was gone. We were frantic because I could not take any position because the chairman had not acted to call for the caucus to act. What did I do? One of the first people I saw was Chairman Mfume. And what did I do? I asked Kweisi. I said, "Kweisi, there's something going to happen on the floor perhaps. I want you to know that there's this segment in the bill for unemployment insurance that targets immigrants, legal immigrants. $320 million will be taken from them. These are aged, blind and disabled lawful residents, who have every single right that citizens have, except to vote, and maybe have a few classified jobs in the government, and have every single obligation that a citizen has. Yet they're now being told that they will be deprived of things that they're entitled to, $320 million worth."

So I mentioned that to Chairman Mfume, not because he was a single vote, but because he is someone that I believe will be sympathetic, and he also happens to be Chairman of the Black Caucus. So in the absence of my own chairman, and in a frenzy, I knew that it was important for me to get word to the Chairman of the Black Caucus. So I started by getting the information by a woman within my own caucus, and then I also made sure I spread the word to someone who I thought was an integral part, if we were going to have success. That was Chairman Mfume.

On the issue of appointments, and I think, Carmen, that you strike to the heart of what I think is going to be where we take — what path we take in that river. How do we work together? Because in many ways, both communities have a lot of qualified people in the areas of social services because that's where we've

been concentrated for so long. You don't see as many of us in armed services or in the business world, although this year, finally, we have a President who recognizes there is a minority who can deal with commerce and business, and we now have Secretary Brown. But I think you find that how we resolve those questions of appointments will truly show the grit and integrity of the two caucuses, how we work together. I think that's crucial, and you hit right on it. I can't tell you that we will always be successful in working together, but I would hope that what we find is, through this union, we will be able to work some of those things out.

And, finally, the global picture, which is truly the one we want to see. Haiti for me is an issue because it deals with people who are impoverished, who are being deprived of their rights, and immigrants. I hope, and I know that we will find that the two caucuses will work on issues of immigrants, because when I saw an amendment that was trying to be added to the National Service Act, which says that people can go out and work in their communities, and a Republican member of California tried to include an amendment that said that any organization that wished to have national service dollars had to guarantee that it provided no services to the undocumented, so much so that it would apply to the Catholic Church, so that on a Sunday morning when they provide worship services, if an undocumented had happened to enter the church, that was providing a service, and therefore, disqualified the Catholic Church from being able to get national service dollars to go out there and provide soup kitchens and anything else.

Well, when that amendment came up, it wasn't just Latinos who spoke against it, but Mr. Mfume. We had Mr. Ossie Hastings from Florida who got up there and spoke so eloquently, and an amendment which we thought we would lose the fight on, that would pass and be inserted into the bill, was defeated 260 to about 170, and that was because we had the help of more than just the Latinos. So it works, and globally it will work.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you, Congressman. I'm going to hold up on the other responses from the two chairs to your questions, and try to — we have a very distinguished group here wanting to ask some questions so —

Mr. Serrano: I just have to announce that I have to leave because I have to begin — I, not you; you have plenty of time yet — I have to begin to set up for the tele-conference, so I have about five more minutes. When I do, the two gentlemen will stay with you, and they'll do a great job.

Mr. Ericksen: So if anybody — a question specifically for Congressman Serrano would be useful at this point.

Mr. de Leia: My name is Dennis deLeia, and I'm the chair of the New York City Human Rights Commission.

I guess one thing that strikes me in these discussions is the difference between what the unity that kind of is developing here, and what is present in many of our cities. And let me start with — there are two parts of that. The first part is within our own communities. Within the Latino community, the issue of racism towards Latinos who are Black, is a very real and untalked about — not spoken about issue, and I think it goes to many of the relations between, say, Dominicans and Puerto Ricans, and even within the Mexicano community, which is from California where I originally hail, the dark skin and light skin, the Indio and the more Spanish looking Mexicanos, those issues, along with issues of sexism and homophobia within our own communities, those issues, I believe, will be an even bigger obstacle in our ability to form a coalition than our feelings about a different race or a different group. And until we make a stab at that, we're not going to make a whole lot of progress.

And secondly, I mean, there really is a need for what you're saying to be carried to the local level, because it really is very different. I mean, the National Urban League study showed that African-Americans had the highest level of antipathy towards immigration of any group nationally.

Mr. Ericksen: That is correct. Because the congressman is going to leave, just to ask you if you have a question of him relating to either of those things, and then come back —

Mr. de Leia: I'm just here to sound off.

Mr. Ericksen: I know, I know.

Mr. de Leia: And I think that's appropriate. I think everybody here has views, and it's a conversation.

Mr. Ericksen: No. It contributed a lot, but I don't want to lose anybody that has a question specifically for Congressman —

Mr. Serrano: No, no. Don't worry about that. I'm leaving and I'll be fine.

Mr. Mfume: Can I take a stab at —

Mr. de Leia: Yeah.

Mr. Mfume: Because you raise an interesting observation. The difference at the national level oftentimes is different from what's happening in local communities.

...how are we as caucuses, Black and Hispanic, going to deal with the whole international scene? I think we have a unique possibility of playing important roles, not only in Central America, but in Africa and other places of the world, and I hope that the caucuses do take that on as a horizon that you can work toward.

And the issue of perceived differences based on skin color is interesting. It was an unfortunate dynamic in the Black community for many, many, many years, where because of our slave mentality coming off of plantations, we were always taught and indoctrinated as a people to believe that if you were lighter in complexion, you were closer to being god-like, or like your master, because your master had power; your master had sway over dominion; your master had the right to determine who should live, who should die, who should be successful, and who should not.

And so for seven decades in our community we had to come to grips with this ongoing double standard, so much so that in 1920 a woman invented a straightening comb so that people could straighten

their hair to be more like the hair of their master; that in the 1930's skin lightening creams and pigmentations were a big seller in the black community because people wanted to be lighter and lighter, and not darker and darker. And that went on through the forties, in terms of the armed services, the standard segregation, and then the segregation among troops within their own racial group because of these perceived differences. That really didn't start changing until the late 1960's, when James Brown stood up and said, "Say it loud, I'm Black and I'm proud," that there was a difference that really didn't have to exist.

...if you've ever seen Nydia, and Lucille, and Ileana on the floor making a point, clearly, you know that they are empowered in such a way that oftentimes it's because of what they do that we get a broader sense of what we must do.

We are, in our own community, still dealing with that. It is probably one of the most unspoken and yet most obvious problems and hurdles that we've had to overcome. For the Black community now that is not like it was years ago. We've overcome it. So it was interesting to hear that same observation within Latino populations, and I think a lot of the reason why there is a big difference in terms of our desire to want to work together at the national level and the antipathy that exists at local levels, and the mistrust, is because it goes back to what Jose I think said, there's not been enough examples at this time from the top coming down. And we don't know where we're going with this, but we believe it's the right thing to do, and if we do it long enough, then maybe it will make a difference at small local and community levels.

Mr. Serrano: You know, Dennis, another thing too, you hit something really on the head, that that is always some people may consider dangerous to bring up, but you know, ten years from now when I look back and I try writing a book and that chapter on chairing the caucus, it's not all being on TV, as you well know, and making nice statements. The differences within the caucus are painful at times. When I first suggested a coalition with the Blacks, to hear people say within the caucus, (Spanish phrase), you know, based on some experience, not on any hate, but just on any fear.

I don't say this just to be flip, but I will bring up an issue, and you've got to learn to accept the fact that some people will make some comment. I find within the caucus at times that I don't have a great sense of humor when it comes to jokes about gays, but that exists in our community. It exists in every community. And you have to look at the person who made the comment about the Black or the gay, or about me indirectly, about Puerto Ricans or whatever, and say, "Yeah, but there is tomorrow, and there will be a bill that we're going to vote on, and I need that bill so I can get more money for AIDS testing," and that he'll vote for. He just will make that — you know, and that's so painful, because you really want to look at your own caucus, at your own community — because a caucus is no different than the community — and line them up at times and slap them, you know.

But then they may have ten reasons why they want to line you up and slap you, so you just deal with it on a day to day basis.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you, Dennis. Thank you, congressman. I'm going to ask for a real quick one word answer from each of you as to where do you think the coalition building is most effective, at the local level or here in Washington between Blacks and Hispanics, based on your own experiences in your communities?

Mr. Becerra: It will take more than a word, but it will be about four. I think, nationally, but because the Beltway — around the Beltway, as they say here in Washington, D.C., this is an artificial world. So it's easy for us to discuss, "Yeah, let's try to get the locals to work. Let's get all of you to work." But then to see you all do it is something different.

Mr. Serrano: And my quick response is that it really should be at the local level, but because —and I'm not jumping up to the people that are up here, but because of the national Hispanic media growth, if there's a national coalition, that could be translated in Spanish locally for people to read and watch on TV, and maybe they'll get into the same habit.

Mr. Ericksen: Congressman?

Mr. Mfume: Well, I guess my answer is somewhere between both of those, or with both of those, and I don't know if I can do it four minutes, so maybe I'll —

Mr. Ericksen: Four words.

Mr. Mfume: Four words. So I just sneak that one in. I don't know. What I do know is that I see people in local communities, working together because they need each other, and it's only when we think that we don't need each other that we don't. And I don't know how to make that any simpler.

When two people are in the same condition in the same community, and recognize they have the same problem, there's a greater willingness to work together. It's only when we think that we don't have to, that we don't, and oftentimes we think we don't have to because "I'm the Black Caucus," and "I'm the Hispanic Caucus," or "I live in New York," or "I live in Miami." And that's the problem. I don't know if I can deal with it any simpler than that except to say that it disturbs and distresses me.

Mr. Ericksen: Okay. Next question.

Mr. Laporte: No, mine is a comment basically. I'm Angel Laporte. I'm the executive director of the Morrisania Clinic in the Bronx, which is part of Congressman Serrano's district.

And, basically, it's strange somehow as I sit here for the morning and listened to this exciting level of conversation, and then as I look now, and as we go back on Monday, most of us to work and then to share with our people the excitement and the outcome of this conference here. I realize somewhat, I have found now that my presence here have taken a new meaning, and that is one of an ambassador, if you will, in taking back this message, and start working with the people back in the

community. And when you talk about being called a leader, and am I now to understand that, yes, this leadership now have taken a new meaning also as I discharge my responsibilities.

And, unfortunately, Congressman Serrano left, but about a month or so ago I had a meeting with him back at the field office in the Bronx, and then I shared with him a model that I've used in our clinic, where we put together up to 400 people of all walks of life, and we talk to them, we allow them to share concerns and to give them a sense of empowerment, as we call the word — and sometimes we misuse it in many, many, many forms — but, yes, this time around, give them this opportunity.

And I like to think that this process now will allow, and as I go back next week, and start thinking in a new way, "How can I share with people the dynamics of what happened here today that are so abstract to explain, and yet so wonderful," which is exactly what we need. I don't know if it's a question, but probably somehow the leadership that is here, represented here, many other than members of the caucuses, we need to work together, and somehow devise models, ways, processes to bring this message to the people, and messages that are going to be, yes, very complex in nature to explain, but yet, if we don't do that, if we're not successful in doing that, all of this here will stop and go as far as today, Saturday.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you, Angel. We're going to except that as a statement, and we'll run to the next question.

Dr. Takash: Actually, another statement, and maybe it will provoke some questions and responses as well.

I'm Dr. Paule Cruz Takash from the Ethnic Studies Department at UC San Diego, and I'm very happy to hear a lot of the talk about harmony and the activities of the two caucuses in trying to achieve more harmony between our populations, but I also wanted to underscore some of the problems that we are experiencing in our communities.

First of all, I wanted to say also that I think that the instances of conflict between our communities very much grab the attention of the mainstream media. They like these kinds of stories. I want to direct your attention to The Atlantic last year, right after the Rodney King riots, the article in the front feature story on the magazine was "Blacks versus Browns."

And I think that the instances where our communities have worked in solidarity, such as what you all are trying to achieve, have been portrayed less frequently in the mainstream media, and again, I think there's a need for those of us who are scholars to try to document what that history of solidarity between our communities has been, and to pass this on to our students and to the communities.

Nonetheless, I think that many of our peoples and national groups do have long-standing suspicions of one another, and these are based on some well-founded circumstances, I think. Historically, I can point to the extension of the Voting Rights Act, to language minorities which initially was not supported by African-Americans. Some of the expressions was that language minorities were trying to piggyback on the civil rights movement and on the gains that African-Americans have made.

More recently, Blacks' suspicions were reinforced about having to look out for their own interests around the Rodney King beating, prior to the riots. Latinos in Los Angeles and elsewhere were very, very late in coming out to support the African-American community's outreach, and also defying police brutality as an issue that we as Latinos face on a daily basis, as well as other people. Again, it reinforces, I think, those suspicions.

And, finally, Latinos suspicions that African-Americans will not support the political empowerment of Latinos because to do will threaten African-Americans' fragile toehold, political toehold, which they have achieved after prolonged struggles, I think has been reinforced when African-Americans choose to remain in coalitions with Whites, rather than aligning with Latinos and other minorities.

In San Diego where I teach, there was an attempt by the Chicano Federation and Filipino residents to create a super-minority district at the county supervisorial level, which would include Blacks, Asians, and African-Americans, and it was soundly rejected by the African-American community, Urban League, and other major organizations for some reasons that I think are resonating at the national level.

> I really believe once we see women become the chair, women are chairpeople, not only the caucus, but speakers of the House, and eventually, and I think soon, President of the United States, we will find a change in the direction of our policies, because I think there's no doubt — and I say this as a man who says it at jeopardy of being in elected office — that women have a much keener sense of what needs to be done to help people than men do.

When I read the depositions take from the African-Americans I was struck by the general theme in their remarks, again, themes that I think are — we're hearing across the country, and that is, that African-Americans feel that they are being inundated by our sheer numbers, by the immigration, the new immigration, that they're being inundated politically as well as economically. Latinos take jobs from Blacks, et cetera.

Mr. Ericksen: Okay. Paula, can I stop you on that point?

Dr. Takash: Yes. Let me just finish up. I have one other comment.

I think that Blacks are being told that — or are expressing these sentiments, and I think that these are fears that lie at the heart of African-American ambivalence about immigration, and also about Latino political empowerment, and perhaps about NAFTA. And I'd like your responses to that.

Mr. Ericksen: Okay. That was a very good question. I think, first of all, may I, as a member of the press, encourage you never to believe what you read in the press about Black and Hispanic —

Dr. Takash: We don't.

Mr. Ericksen: Good.

Now, if we could start with you, Congressman, as a response to the — particularly about the fact — not the whole litany, but just being inundated. Is there a fear in the Black community that they are being inundated, and do you hear it too often, Hispanics saying, "We're going to pass Blacks by the year 2010?"

Within the Latino community, the issue of racism towards Latinos who are Black, is a very real and untalked about —not spoken about issue, and I think it goes to many of the relations between, say, Dominicans and Puerto Ricans, and even within the Mexicano community...

Mr. Mfume: I think what I hear among people in the Black community is that — and they don't use the term "inundated," but they have adopted and accepted the false premise of the larger society that says, "You'd better watch out because those Asians are going to take your community over," or "Those Latinos are going to take your community over," and without the capacity to reason sometimes, and because people too often wear narrow blinders, they accept that foolhardy notion, and develop this great paranoia that exists. I think it exists in every community, and yes, to some extent it exists in the Black community.

See, you get beyond that when you show people how much you are alike. As long as I can remember in this country, since the day I was born, I have been socialized to believe that everybody is out to get what I have, "A"; and that, "B", the only way I can keep it is to take on the mentality of the people who took it from me, and that is, to be oppressive in my own way, to have my own stereotypes, to build my own little enclaves, and to fight for my own little share. But the larger picture is what we learn, hopefully, as we develop in life, and that that is the big lie theory. It really is the big lie. But people accept it. You know and I know we don't even have to go back to California.

We can go in downtown Washington, and go to the Hyatt Hotel, where Latinos and Blacks who are both in service work there, are made to believe that each other has to protect the number of jobs each other has. And so while we're fighting together for service jobs, we're denied the larger pictures in management, administration, and that sort of thing. It just — it has worked so long in this country, that now people don't always have to blatantly perpetrate it because it's taken hold, unfortunately, in our communities. We start perpetrating it.

And I suggest to you that it has gone beyond Black and Latino. It is now Asians also who we believe are — there's a problem with them. You can't trust them. They're out to get what we have. And we just keep fighting at the lower levels, all of us one another, and we miss the possibilities exist because we could unify. I think this nation is absolutely frightened at the prospect of coalition, and that is why it's not promoted in the media, it's not promoted in the pop culture. It's not promoted anywhere except on sports fields, because people recognize the sheer —

This society recognizes the awesome strength of coalition, and the only people who are promoting it are us, but people who are most affected by it, but not the large of society as a whole.

Mr. Ericksen: Congressman Becerra.

Mr. Becerra: And I would agree with what Chairman Mfume has said. Let me just give you a quick example. You mentioned the tension between African-Americans and Latinos. Let me boil it down to even something more simple that we all experience. As a Chicano from California, I am often berated because I use the word "Latino," and they say, "Why don't you say you're Chicano?" And I say, "I'm Latino," and if someone next to me happens to have Central American roots, they are Latino, but they may not consider themselves Chicano because of the definition, but we're put into the same class.

And whether it's a scholarship that was created to help Chicanos, if a Central American is applying for that scholarship, in my mind that person is entitled to get that scholarship. People would tell me, "You're crazy. You're depriving Chicanos who fought for this right to have that scholarship in that university, an opportunity to have that," or "Whenever we accept someone to university who was Central American, we're depriving a Chicano someone of Mexican origin a chance to go on to college." I think to myself that's no different from saying a Latino is depriving an African-American of that.

So we do it. You can chop it down to the micro level if you wish, micro or macro it happens, and Chairman Mfume is right. We're taught to be against each other. We're taught to learn the words "them" and "us" versus just "we." And it will go on, and that's what has to change.

...I see people in local communities, working together because they need each other, and it's only when we think that we don't need each other that we don't.

But what you bring up is true, and that's why we sit here today, because we're trying to ignite that flame that will show that we can unite.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you. Next. New York again.

Mr. Reyes: Luis Reyes, a member of the board of education in New York, and a Puerto Rican. I'm sorry that Chairman Mfume isn't —

Mr. Ericksen: He'll be right back. If you want to wait until he comes back in, and let the gentleman behind you speak, that's all right.

Mr. Reyes: That's all right. I will let you do your

job to moderate and inform him.

Coalition building is something that I personally believe in, having picketed the White House in 1964 as a college student at Catholic University here in Washington, D.C. for the Voting Rights Act.

Part of coalition building is agenda building, and that's building issues that are not just based on the personalities of the coalition members, but also on the issues, and as an educator and a member of the board of education, I'd like to suggest to the members of the Black and Hispanic Caucus, members and leaders, an agenda in education for joint work, and I suggest specifically, joint hearings, local joint hearings of members of the Black and Hispanic Caucus in our areas around these issues. And I also suggest joint leadership development among our African-American and Latino students. If we have African-American and Latino fellows here on the Hill, if somehow you can bring them together, but not just here on the Hill in Washington, but in our communities.

And the agenda I suggest is conflict and violence, which happens in both neighborhoods and in schools, that the agenda has to do with how do we, especially in schools, develop young peoples' ability to resolve conflicts, and that means training young people about conflict. It means also supporting multicultural education, whether it's the study of African-American history and culture, or it's the study of Latino. That means supporting each other in the effort for multicultural inclusion in the schools.

Educational reform, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act is vital to both the Black and the Hispanic communities, and Title 1 is an area for both of the caucuses to be supporting each other in the targeting of federal dollars to needy students, because we're talking in our urban areas of African-American, Mexican-American, Puerto Rican, and other Latino students. And for us in the Latino caucus part of us, Title 7, in bilingual education, getting strong support from the Black Caucus for that.

The Goals 2000 Education Bill of the Clinton administration, we need strong agenda coalition building between the two caucuses around the service delivery standards. Reilly and all of our other education leaders are talking about standards for students, but we need to insure in the reauthorization of the ESEA, as well as in the Goals 2000 that there is support for the service delivery standards that are required, whether it's teachers, or minority teachers, and training of teachers. If there are mandates from Congress, that we get funds for the building and maintenance of our schools.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you, Luis. I want to ask you —

Mr. Reyes: Let me just finish, please.

Mr. Ericksen: Wind it up right now for those behind you.

Mr. Reyes: The voting rights of non-citizens, whether it's in LA or in New York and other cities, getting support from the Black Caucus, as well as the Hispanic Caucus, for non-citizen voters in school board elections is a vital area, because that's how we build the base. We wouldn't have a city councilman who's Dominican if we didn't have a non-citizen voting rights in New York City, which produced a strong Dominican community in Washington Heights.

Mr. Ericksen: Okay, thank you.

Mr. Reyes: And so I would ask you whether it's in support of public choice against vouchers, or fighting the religious right, how the Black Caucus as well as the Hispanic Caucus can work together?

Mr. Ericksen: Okay. Thanks very much. Sorry to cut you short but we don't want —

Mr. Reyes: Can I ask for a reaction?

Mr. Becerra: And I think I can react for Chairman Mfume as well. You can trust me on this one. You're absolutely right. You mentioned joint hearings between the two communities, joint leadership development, joint action when it comes to our youth, education issues, voting rights issues.

As I think you heard the two chairman say earlier, sometimes it requires leaders to be a bit ahead of the curve, and what you point out is doing exactly that, being ahead of the curve in this hearings, in leadership development, and I'm certain that both chairmen would say yes. I know I would say yes, and many members in both caucuses would say yes, and all those ideas you've mentioned are very valid.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you. Okay. Mr. Hinojosa.

Mr. Hinojosa: I'm Raul Hinojosa. I'm a professor at UCLA, and by the way, I'm one of the Chicanos that didn't grow up 20 miles away from the Black community. I grew up on the south side of Chicago, and in fact, got my political teeth cut working with Harold Washington in the Black/Latino Coalition that put him in power. Unfortunately, that fell apart, and now you know what we have there.

I wanted to ask a question about principles that Black/Latino caucuses can have on trade and international investment, both in South Africa with Mr. Mandela, CBI, NAFTA, China. What type of common principles can we begin to develop there?

I've been working with the Latino consensus on NAFTA for over two years, working closely with the Hispanic Congressional Caucus, and by the way, the NAACP. And what we have done is — on the basis of a lot of study shown that the people who may be most negatively affected, even though there are positive gains from NAFTA, for example, the ones that are disproportionately would be hurt are Blacks and Latinos, particularly by the way, more Latinos than Blacks. Why?

> And so for seven decades in our community we had to come to grips with this ongoing double standard, so much so that in 1920 a woman invented a straightening comb so that people could straighten their hair to be more like the hair of their master; that in the 1930's skin lightening creams and pigmentations were a big seller in the black community because people wanted to be lighter and lighter, and not darker and darker.

Because Latinos are much more represented in the manufacturing center than Blacks are as a share of their population. And it's usually the non-traded —in the tradeable sectors of the economy you have a lot more recent immigrants, curiously enough, who will be hurt mostly from NAFTA, even though all our studies show there's also a net positive gain.

What we have tried to show is that there is options from a pure free trade to a "just say no" type of an approach, and that is an approach of managed —interdependence managed trade. The core of that is the proposal by Congressman Torres for a North American development bank in the case of NAFTA, which has been, by the way, supported all the way from Jesse Jackson to Orrin Hatch, so it has a very interesting appeal.

I wanted to know what type of principles have you all begun to discuss? The fact that four billion of the five billion people on this earth are from the Third World, and here we are, Blacks and Latinos, inside the First World, if you will, and that in a sense, what Mandela is asking us in terms of liberalization of trade with South Africa, and our —and potentially, if we do it right with Mexico and with other parts of the world — could negatively affect our communities, but on the other hand, we have a political agenda to work with for democracy and development with the Third World. Have you thought about that, and specifically on the NAFTA? Does that ring any bells?

Mr. Mfume: Well, we've thought about it, and we've tried to do something about it as well.

...the reason why there is a big difference in terms of our desire to want to work together at the national level and the antipathy that exists at local levels, and the mistrust, is because it goes back to what José I think said, there's not been enough examples at this time from the top coming down.

We believe that there are a number of principles, but the ones that seem to be the most guiding that come up over and over and over in discussion with respect to trade and international issues are the principles of opportunity, whether or not there's equal opportunity there for people of color; the issue of parity, whether or not as we explore those opportunities, there will be a parity there for people of color versus the general White population, and whether or not there's a matter of fairness in terms of what we are doing with trade and global issues.

Now, I think it's fair to say that depending on the issue, there may be other principles, but as I've talked to Jose, and as our groups have interacted formally and informally, and mostly informally, those seem to be the things that guide us in terms of where we fall out on global issues or on trade issues. NAFTA's the first real test in this Congress, and I think if — and I'm going to just say something that has not been documented, but I think that most members of the Black Caucus, and most members of the Hispanic Caucus have a single opinion with respect to NAFTA, and there may be dissension in both caucuses by a smaller number of people who do not.

But the principles of opportunity, parity, and fairness seem to be the guiding ones. So it's not just something that we've thought about. We've talked it, and that seems to be the common denominator.

Mr. Becerra: Let me add that I really believe that in Congress we have to do a better job of moving the focus, when we talk about foreign aide, away from Europe and towards Latin America and Africa. If we're really talking about providing assistance, any dollars we send down I think should be infrastructure development, and obviously, a lot of the money we send out is not for that. It's oftentimes spent on military hardware. And when you see the focus so completely on the Middle East, I think that we are depriving a number of countries and a number of people of the benefits of our foreign assistance.

And I would hope that one thing we could do, especially as two caucuses, is work to make sure that Africa and Latin America get much more of a focus when it comes to any money that we decide to send out of this country into others.

As I said before, the second point would be then, if we do send money out, and if we can focus it on those two areas of the world, it should be on development that will help the people sustain themselves, not necessarily to fight a war, or to try to keep one government in power, or to try to keep our own national interest far abroad still alive and kicking. I think what we should be doing is spending money that will help people so later on we don't have to face the consequence of immigration into the country, perhaps, or of trying to bail out a country, or trying to reinsert a democratic government. We should try to do things that will help the people develop themselves so that they have the power to dictate what will happen with their government.

And, finally, with respect to NAFTA, I think what you will find at the heart of the debate, mostly for Latinos and African-Americans, I think, and in our decision-making process, is what happens to the people we most represent? I think you find most of the members in the two caucuses who were opposed to NAFTA at this stage, are opposed because we see that it will be the people we represent who will be most negatively affected by NAFTA at this stage, and we don't see the promise of the prosperity necessarily accruing, in this case, for example, to the Mexican worker at this stage with the agreement.

But I will tell you right now, I am one who would love to be able to vote for NAFTA, and if I see the NAD bank, and if I see a comprehensive fully-funded with a permanent source of funding program for workers dislocated by NAFTA, and if I — I mean, guarantee that there will be some accommodations provided to the environmental areas that will be affected, then I will be voting yes on NAFTA. But do I see that happening at this stage? No.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you both very much. We're going to take one more question. Then we're going

...I think that many of our peoples and national groups do have long-standing suspicions of one another, and these are based on some well-founded circumstances, I think. Historically, I can point to the extension of the Voting Rights Act, to language minorities which initially was not supported by African-Americans.

to have the two speakers sum up, and then we will get instructions that are critical to all of you concerning the broadcast that will be starting at — I believe it's one o'clock. So go ahead, sir.

Mr. Peña: Thank you. My name is Ignacio Peña. I come from California, part of the south central Los Angeles. I was the first Mexican — as they called me at the beginning — elected to the Compton Community College, and believe me, there we have a traditional Black college, in which at the beginning — believe me — I didn't know what in the world I was walking into, okay?

There I can relate with the fact that we were seen actually as a threat because we were coming in to take something that belonged to them. Now, a year and a half later, I can tell you one thing: coalition works. I didn't know. I could not relate it with a coalition, but I can relate with the fact that I found a true friend in one of my colleagues, Mrs. Emily Hart-Hollifield, in which she is supportive of the Latino issues as any Latino. What I have found through the months is that there's good and bad people in every race, and what this caucus is doing is actually giving me more arguments to come up with how we have been together, because as a Mexican too, I didn't know that Blacks lived within the hall, myself too. I have heard that Puerto Ricans have been exposed to, Cubans too, but as I said, from my perspective, there's good and bad people in every race.

And today my question is if I could please have whatever resume, whatever paper comes out of this conference because we still need to work at some other members of mine, but, yes, you know, we have people working for our same issues in every race. Thank you.

Mr. Ericksen: Responses?

Mr. Becerra: Ignacio, I would just say that you're going to be at the cutting edge of what we all do because you were in a neighborhood where it all happens. Whereas, you and I perhaps were not born in a neighborhood where we saw the relationship strongly with the Black community, our children will, because in south central they are living next door to each other, and now they will be able to say what Jose Serrano said earlier, so we will see that.

But another poignant point on that: in south central Los Angeles you can probably count on less than the five fingers on my hand, the number of service agencies that are there to service Latinos, again, in an area that has 40 to 50 percent Latino population.

We have a lot of work to do just to build up the infrastructure for Latinos within south central, and as well as to coalesce with the African-American community that's there.

But your point is well taken. You will be able to obtain some of the information, but I hope what you will take — and I'm really heartened by what you said, that this sort of ignites the hope that this can all happen, because, quite honestly, I don't know if Chairman Serrano, or I, or Chairman Mfume, or any one of us knew what might happen in this dialog. We didn't know if it would get heated, or what — or if everyone would just tune out, or what would happen. But you are now about the fourth person who has said, "It's great to see this because now I can go back and say that there is something happening," and that's really what — all we could really expect.

Mr. Ericksen: Congressman Mfume, do you want to answer to that question, and then we'll let you sum up.

Mr. Mfume: Well, maybe I'll just use my summary to go ahead and respond to it, because I do want to.

Mr. Ericksen: Before that, how much time do they have to sum up?

...I have found now that my presence here has taken a new meaning, and that is one of an ambassador, if you will, in taking back this message, and start working with the people back in the community.

First of all, I want to thank all those who did stand in line, and who did not have an opportunity to speak, and I would ask that the summary conversations now focus on the issue that we're here to talk about, which is specifically, Black, Brown working together to resolve common issues. And I will make a personal comment that back in the twenties — we had talked about New York having Mayor Dinkins coming out in support of a Hispanic candidate. I think one of the best Latino or Chicano legislators we ever had out of California was Merv Dymally, who was Black, who was not Hispanic, and he risked his political career and his reputation many, many times to work for what he felt was a common good.

With that, summaries.

Mr. Mfume: Let me begin where this gentleman left off. And you're right, I mean, not only does it help you, it helps us, I think it's fair to say.

And people say, "Well, what's so unique about the Black community?" And I say, "Well, look, there's an old adage that says most of us are average, we have a few geniuses, and like everyone else, a liberal sprinkling of fools." It's to say that all of our groups, when we define ourselves, really define ourselves pretty much

the same in many respects. We have the same wants and the same desires.

But there's another old adage that says, "I can't believe what you say because I see what you do," which means for me to come before you today, and to purport to do or to be something other than I'm not, is hypocritical.

As long as I can remember in this country, since the day I was born, I have been socialized to believe that everybody is out to get what I have, "A"; and that, "B", the only way I can keep it is to take on the mentality of the people who took it from me, and that is, to be oppressive in my own way, to have my own stereotypes, to build my own little enclaves, and to fight for my own little share.

And that is why I speak as earnestly as I can with a sense of urgency that I have because, first of all, tomorrow's not guaranteed to any of us, and if we are to be a part of tomorrow, then I think we have an obligation to make it better, and we make it better by trying to look at ourselves, and being honest in the mirror in terms of what our own shortcomings as individuals are, to get beyond them, and to say that "I'm going to try to find a way, if no one else does, to make this a better world."

And so when we do that, reaching out toward one another, and in coalition, we have to set up real and attainable goals. One of our goals has to be to change the existing definitions that are out there, which is why I applauded Ben Chavis for announcing that it's not enough to have a National Association of Colored People unless you're going to have Latino chapters throughout this country.

Changing that definition means changing it on the playing field, and saying to major league sports that, you know, "We run hard, and we play basketball, baseball, and football, but it is not so much that we enjoy the sport on the field, as much as we want also the opportunities later to be a part of management and decision-making." Changing the definitions in the media, where the media over and over and over again continues to suggest, if not as blatantly as before, certainly as frequently, that Blacks have a certain role, Latinos have a certain role. I talked to my oldest son about the movie "Ghost" a couple years ago, and he just thought it was the greatest movie around, and we all laughed about it, but I reminded him that there were subtle images in there. And the image that Whoopi Goldberg played is an image that's played out often, that Black people can only be wheelers and dealers and crooks, and want to take your money and engage in crime. And that the gentleman who kills the guy in the beginning is a Latino, Mr. Hernandez, who is this terrible person who lives in New York, and just like all Latinos, can only engage himself in crime.

So when we got beyond the euphoria of the movie, my premise is that even in media we have to redefine those things that are oftentimes given as definitions.

Someone asked about the international affairs and global issues, and maybe I'll stop on this point. We have been taught in our generations that the world exists east and west, Soviet Union, United States, east and west. But the real world is also north and south. It's developing versus non-developing countries, and Xavier's position that we have to find ways now to go beyond just buying arms and to provide development programs is real, because it's all right here within the confines of the Beltway to fight for things, but you and I know that people in the hinterland around this country, and around this world, really need help.

This issue about black and brown is not so much, I think, an issue between Black and Brown people, as much as it is an issue in the larger society that then makes it an issue for us. We've got to reject the — over and over again the notions that we get that we're different, and we ought to not trust one another. But you can only do that, ladies and gentlemen, by reaching out. That's the only way. I say this to members of the caucus, who don't, as Jose said, have mistrust because they're a part of another generation like he indicated that some members of the Hispanic Caucus do. They have it because their whole focus is Black, Black, Black, Black, Black, Black, Black. You know, it's a very narrowly defined concept, when it's really much broader than that. And unless you open yourself up to it, and prepare to say to yourself that, "I'm missing something here," you really will miss something.

And so I have to remind them over and over again, "Yeah, it's about Black, but it's about people of color. It's about people of color." And when people begin to understand that, it's easier than to work both at a national level, but even more so in communities.

We really didn't know what we were going to do today, except that we were going to reach out and try. And the next effort will be the same way, and the one after that. But I have to tell you, and I'm sure if Jose was here, he'd say the same thing. As Chairmen of these respective caucuses, we get more out of this than we put into it, because we hear in a very frank and open way what you're thinking and what your questions are, and your criticisms and your doubts, and we appreciate, as we have heard over and over again, how this also helps you.

I think this nation is absolutely frightened at the prospect of coalition, and that is why it's not promoted in the media, it's not promoted in the pop culture.

So, I've learned from living long enough, that if you keep trying, and if you keep believing, things will change. But if you ever give up, nothing will change. The world will remain the same, and we will go to our graves having not learned a basic lesson of life.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you very much.

Okay. Set attainable goals was the main thing I heard. What do we hear from you?

Mr. Becerra: Well, let me first say that I want to thank the Institute, Rita Elizondo, and everyone within the Institute for making this possible, and most of all, tip my hat to the Chairman of the Black Caucus, Kweisi Mfume, and the Chairman of the Hispanic Caucus, Mr. José Serrano, for truly putting this together, and making sure that we had a chance to have this dialog.

Let me summarize and tell you what I think we should get out of this. First, and principally, Latinos must coalesce. We can't talk about coalescing with others until we coalesce with ourselves.

Second, we have to be straight with each other, whether it's Latino with Latino, or Latinos with Blacks. Let's be straight. Let's not hide at their attention. Let's not hide there's a lot of work to do. Let's not hide that we don't know enough about each other in many ways to be able to work efficiently, and always as aggressively as we can. Let's be straight, get rid of the misconceptions, the suspicions, and then let's get to work. And I think we'll find we'll be able to do that.

Third, and I think Mr. Mfume said this, it's to show me, show me what you're going to do. Don't tell me what you're going to do, show me what you're going to do. And we have to be prepared to show anyone we wish to go into coalition with, whether it's Blacks, other Latinos, what we will do, and we have to be prepared to show. And so everyone has to be ready to go to the table and say, "Show me."

And, finally — and this goes to the point of those who have to go back and work in the local communities — this, I think, is perhaps the most important thing that we get out of this today, and that is, that leaders not only ride the crest of the wave, but leaders are truly the people who cast the stone that creates that ripple. And so, if this created a ripple today, I hope that when you all go back, you are prepared to case that stone to create the ripples in your local communities, because that is how it all begins.

So whether the people show you, whether we coalesce, will depend on whether you are ready to case that stone. And I suspect from the comments that were made that we're ready to cast more stones, and we're ready here to catch some of those so we can work here with you in Washington, D.C. Thank you very much.

Mr. Ericksen: Thank you both, gentlemen, for I think what was a very inspired dialog, and please, don't get up from your seats until you hear from Rita. Come ahead, and she's got some important things to tell us. Thanks again to all of you.

Ms. Elizondo: Thank you, Charlie, a friend of the institute, a friend of the Hispanic community, and a great journalist. Thank you, Charlie.

Thank you, Congressman Mfume, for being here with us, and sharing, Congressman Becerra.

And thank all of you for coming from California, from New York, from Wisconsin. There's people from all over the country. I can't thank you enough for helping us make this a success. It was the first time you've heard Congressman Serrano say over and over again, "It's an experiment." Let me tell you, folks, it worked. Thank you very, very much.

We're taught to be against each other. We're taught to learn the words "them" and "us" versus just "we." And it will go on, and that's what has to change.

Electronic Town Meeting

The final event of the Issues Conference interconnected participants in Latino communities in Los Angeles, San Antonio, Chicago, Miami, New York and San Juan with Hispanic Congressional leaders in Washington, DC. The Electronic Town Meeting (ETM) provided a vehicle for approximately one thousand additional community leaders and activists to participate in this conference.

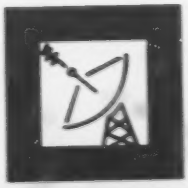
To prepare the local community participants for this event, the Institute surveyed them on various aspects of the same six issues addressed during the Issues Conference. The two-hour length of the ETM required a mechanism to ensure a focused discussion and efficient use of the time. The survey results provided that, as the last question asked respondents to rank issues in order of priority. Education was ranked as the top issue; health care was ranked second and community viability/development was ranked third. Accordingly, the two-hour ETM was divided into three segments.

In Washington, DC, the ETM was moderated by NBC Weekend Today Anchor Jackie Nespral. Panelists included the Honorable Jose E. Serrano, CHCI Chairman, the Honorable Esteban Torres, the Honorable Ed Pastor and the Honorable Xavier Becerra. Each site was moderated by an Hispanic Congressional member:

Los Angeles - the Honorable Lucille Roybal-Allard
San Antonio - the Honorable Frank Tejeda
Chicago - the Honorable Luis Gutierrez
Miami - the Honorable Ileana Ros-Lehtinen and
the Honorable Lincoln Diaz-Balart
New York - the Honorable Robert Menendez
San Juan - the Honorable Carlos Romero-Barcelo

The ETM was successful in two respects. By providing a technologically-sophisticated approach for more Latinos to enter the policy-making process, large portions of the Latino community spoke directly to the national Hispanic leadership. Further, by providing this forum, the ETM was helpful in the process of establishing recognition that the Congressional Hispanic Caucus represents national leadership for Latinos.

Given the success of this effort, the Institute is planning more opportunities to utilize the ETM as a mechanism for incorporating Latino input in the national debate on such issues as health care reform.



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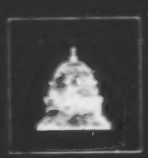

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